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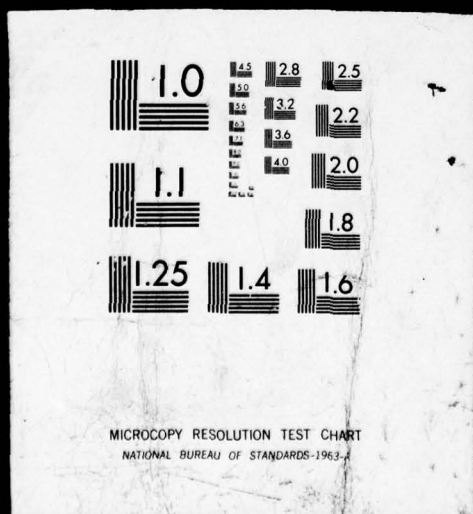


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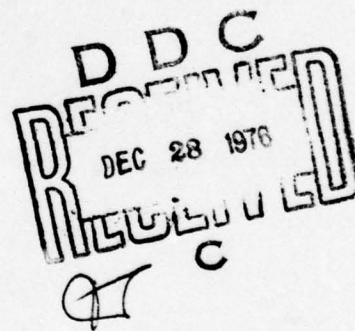
COOPERATION AND CONFLICT:

Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian
Objectives and U.S. Policy

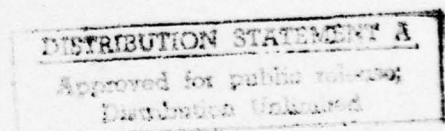
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March 1975



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COOPERATION AND CONFLICT:

Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian Objectives

and

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

R. D. McLaurin, currently with Abbott Associates, Inc., was a research scientist with the American Institutes for Research during the research and writing of this study. Dr. McLaurin was employed by AIR for six years. Prior to joining AIR, he served with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs). Dr. McLaurin is the author of the recent book, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy*, as well as a number of other articles, studies, and other publications.

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PREFACE

The concept of perpetual enmity (as of perpetual amity) in bilateral international relations does not stand the test of history. National interests are shaped by a dynamic environment. This study has been based on the assumptions that Egypt, Iraq, and Syria share a number of important interests with the United States and that these interests, as well as those in which there is conflict, should be recognized and dealt with.

The research described in this report grew directly from an earlier study on the Soviet Union's policies and activities in the Middle East. At the time the research was originally conceptualized, proposed, and begun, the belief that Iraq and Syria were mere Soviet tools in the Middle East was common, and the view that the United States and those two countries shared virtually no interests even more widespread. That neither country has been reduced to such a dependent status should be clear from events of the last five years. Indeed, both Iraq and Syria have demonstrated very considerable independence of action, as the succeeding pages amply demonstrate. After July 1972, fewer people accused Egypt of being a foreign lackey and more began to see some commonalities of interest between the United States and Egypt.

During the course of our research, a major war broke out between Egypt and Syria, on the one hand, and Israel, on the other. Other Arab forces, including prominently those of Iraq, joined the primary Arab belligerents. The political results of this conflict were indeed far-reaching: a new era of Arab-American relations seemed on the threshold, particularly after the negotiation of limited Israeli withdrawals on the Suez and Golan fronts in late 1973 and mid-1974. After the research was completed and the report submitted in draft form, the momentum these withdrawals seemed to confer on the movement toward a general Middle East settlement began to wane, and the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict no longer has (if it ever had) a high probability of reaching a negotiated settlement without additional military action.

We cannot avoid the emphasis on the importance of this conflict has to Arab-American relations, because the close identification of the United States with Israel has clearly affected the number and salience of interests

in harmony and conflict as between the United States, on the one hand, and Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, on the other. The interests shared are substantively unrelated to the Arab-Israeli conflict, true, but the salience of that issue to the three Arab countries has a strong bearing on the parameters on U.S. relations with the Arab world, and particularly with those countries.

The original concept behind this research was developed by Paul Jureidini and Ron McLaurin, both then associated with the American Institutes for Research, and Lt. Cols. Alfred B. Prados and Thomas Pianka of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs). Throughout the research a number of people have contributed to or assisted the authors. In particular, we wish to express our appreciation to two individuals with whom we worked at the American Institutes for Research and who are now our colleagues at Abbott Associates, Incorporated, Dr. Preston S. Abbott and Dr. Paul A. Jureidini; and to four former colleagues at AIR whose help was absolutely vital: Joan Flood, who performed myriad tasks, all perfectly; Lily Griner, who tolerated the intolerable in terms of a number of administrative matters; Susan Haseltine, who, as always, helped in every area imaginable--keeping us abreast of relevant publications, overlooking our harassment, and meeting each and every one of our often unreasonable requests; and Sally Skillings, who read and edited large portions of the study in draft form. We have also benefitted from the indispensable support and advice of Mr. Jerrold K. Milsted, Lt. Cols. Alfred B. Prados and Thomas Pianka, and Commander Gary G. Sick, of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs), and from the counsel and assistance of Professors Abdul Aziz Said and Alan Taylor of The American University; Professor Kerim K. Key, Howard University; Professor Phebe A. Marr, University of Tennessee; Dr. Peter A. Gubser, Ford Foundation; Professor Edward E. Azar, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Professor Thomas J. Sloan, Kansas State University; and Drs. Alaeddin S. Hreib, Sami A. Khoury, and Charles H. Wagner.

With the amount of help and support received, we should aspire to only that touch of imperfection that identifies this report as a human product. Additional shortcomings are certainly those of the authors.

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CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

The politics of Egypt and Syria since the mid-1950s and of Iraq since 1958 have been characterized by a high volume of anti-Western polemic. These countries, under changing leaders and in changing situations, have come to be considered, not altogether justifiably, as the "radical Arab" states. U.S. relations with the regimes in each have varied, but were in a generally deteriorating spiral from the 1950s until very recently. Particularly since 1967, Egypt, Iraq, and Syria have constituted unknown quantities in ever-tense Middle East politics.

While Egyptian-U.S. contact continued at a higher level from 1967 to 1973 than American interaction with Iraq or Syria, emergence of the view in some quarters (especially after Nasser's death) that Egypt was no longer a key variable in the regional equation limited the potential of the continued contact. Thus, the official U.S. presence in and cooperation with Egypt have been minimal. Ironically, the low profile and diplomatic distance have been most pronounced during the presidency of Anwar Sadat, who is particularly well disposed toward the United States.

Recent relations with Iraq have been worse than those of the U.S. with either Egypt or Syria. A number of major policy conflicts have caused recurrent friction with the United States. Moreover, Iraqi domestic turmoil has conduced to making strong and sometimes vitriolic attacks on United States interests and objectives in the region. For some years, many responsible U.S. officials have talked and acted in such a manner as to suggest Iraq was an implacable and perpetual enemy of the United States. However, time and broader perspective cast considerable doubt on this supposition. In addition, Iraq's oil reserves, now believed to be second in the Middle East only to those of Saudi Arabia, and her role vis-a-vis both the Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf provide substantial incentives and significant potential payoffs to the United States for the improvement of relations.

Syria was the first Arab country whose government developed a strongly anti-Western tone. The great volume of polemic traditionally emanating from Damascus, while due largely to turbulent domestic politics, has tended, as in the case of Iraq, to exacerbate often strained relations with the

United States. However, Syria is a key state both in the Arab world and in the Arab-Israeli conflict. To the extent the United States aspires to a more influential and congenial position in the former and to the resolution of the latter, a more cooperative atmosphere in U.S.-Syrian relations is necessary.

There are, then, important reasons to begin to improve U.S. relations with Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. Furthermore, each of those countries shares important interests with the United States, and all have incentives to interact more heavily with America and Americans, notwithstanding their perceptions of domestic political constraints.

Taking into consideration the impact of domestic, inter-Arab, Arab-Israeli, superpower and other international economic, political, military, and social considerations, this research identifies and describes the decision environment of Egypt, Iraq, and Syria; briefly traces U.S. interests, objectives, and policies in the Middle East; identifies areas of convergence and divergence in the United States' interests, on the one hand, and the interests of Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, on the other; and suggests techniques and policy alternatives that might enable the United States to capitalize on cooperative potential and minimize possible conflicts with Egypt, Iraq, and Syria in order to increase the effectiveness of U.S. Middle East policy.

Well after this research was conceptualized and proposed, a major war broke out in the Middle East. Following the cessation of general hostilities in late October 1974,¹ the United States began a bold, new initiative toward a general settlement. The conclusion of this effort is still far off, but already the U.S. effort has led to a renaissance in American relations with Egypt. We believe, as chapters four, six and seven below will demonstrate, that the American effort has put the United States at the threshold of a new relationship with Syria, as well.

The organization of this study is as follows. The policy environment is both external and internal. The external environment in which decisions are made deals with foreign influences and constraints on policy. The internal environment in each case presents a description and analysis

¹ Clashes continued around Mt. Hermon (Syrian-Israeli front) into the spring of 1974.

of the major interest groups and issue areas of each country, the constituencies, as it were, to which the national leadership must be responsive. Against a background of these policy environments, national objectives and programs are described. The structure of chapters two (Egypt), three (Iraq), and four (Syria) is similar. Chapter five presents a summary of relevant American objectives and interests in the Middle East. Following a survey of the trends and tenor in bilateral relations in chapter six, the convergences and divergences of Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian interests with and from those of the United States are delineated. Chapter seven summarizes the study conclusions.

Authorship of chapters one, six, and seven is shared. Mohammed Mughissudin is responsible for chapters two and three; R.D. McLaurin, for chapters four and five.

It is hoped that this study will facilitate the improvement of U.S. bilateral ties with Iraq, as well as Egypt and Syria, and that mutual interests in the Middle East will be that much closer to realization.

CHAPTER TWO. EGYPTIAN INTERESTS AND POLICIES

EGYPTIAN POLICY ENVIRONMENT

It is axiomatic to say that most domestic and foreign policies of a nation-state are formulated to maximize the perceived national interests of the state and to forge and maintain a societal unity based preferably on a *consensus juris* that implies an equitable distribution of national wealth as well as political power among the major social and economic groups in the country. Dissimilar political and economic milieux have produced a variety of decision-making systems, which though dissimilar in forms and structures as they may be, are nonetheless similar in substance, i.e., they are channels of communications between the interest articulators and the decision-makers whose responsibility it is to try to synthesize the often conflicting interests of various competing interest groups. These channels of communications exist both on the formal and informal levels, a factor which provides the investigator an opportunity as well as a challenge in his attempt to reach a cognitive understanding of the system. A more realistic understanding of the decision-making process does not, however, equip us with a tool capable of making an accurate prediction of political or economic issues in a country. Such an understanding allows us merely to predict a range or series of actions most likely to be considered by the decision-makers prior to making a final decision.

Equally important to our understanding of the decision-making process is our understanding of the environment--internal and external--within which realistic decisions are made and implemented at the various functional levels. In its decision-making environment each country is unique. Its social, cultural, and political systems as well as its natural and human resources are more often than not quite different from all or most other states. Notwithstanding the inherent differences in the tangible and intangible resources of the nation-states, it is still useful to apply uniform methods and criteria in understanding the decision-making milieux of the states under study.

In this respect, it is highly desirable, first, to describe briefly the political environment of the country. This means: a discussion of interest groups and identification of their stated goals; the degree of political and economic freedom enjoyed by the population; the degree of

freedom allowed to the communication media; the extent of freedom allowed to political or other groups to articulate their interests; the degree of social, religious, and ethnic cohesion possessed by the populace; and the degree of respect and support commanded by the government. In our discussion of these environmental factors, we do not intend to use a quantitative method because the non-Western societies under discussion have levels of education, communications, and historically rooted attitudes toward governments that do not readily lend themselves to the Western quantitative approach.

Although we will use familiar Western political concepts, classifications, and terminologies in our discussions, the political and social systems of Egypt, Syria, and Iraq do not lend themselves to an accurate application of these concepts and classifications. For example, a classification of Egypt as a single-party state might evoke in the minds of some Western readers an image of the Bolsheviks or the Blackshirts in the interwar period in the Soviet Union and Italy, respectively. Legally, Egypt is a single-party state. The party, however, is not an all-pervasive force either in the policy-making or in the implementation processes in the country. Beyond a few general "ideological" statements, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) does not enjoy either class, religious, or ideological cohesion. Under the rubric of ASU, all colorations of the political spectrum are present with the exception of the proscribed Muslim Brotherhood and the Communist Party (which "voluntarily" dissolved itself in the 1960s). Not only the so-called political right, center, and left are under the ASU umbrella, but the interests of the armed forces, students, farmers, workers, and the bureaucracy are also subsumed in the party. The representatives of these interest groups articulate their respective interests and play the political game within the parameters of this organization. The diversity of interests of the component parts of this organization and a continuous struggle for influence between it and the popularly elected national assembly make the ASU far less than a dictatorial party that its status as the sole legal party in Egypt might imply in the context of Western political concepts.

Similarly, one might talk about the preponderance of civilian power in the Iraqi Baath and thus deduce that the regime was more "liberal" than before when the military held a preponderance of power. Such a conclusion would be erroneous because in the Iraqi milieu these classifications and

the civil-military dichotomy do not carry the same implications and meanings as in a Western milieu. In the case of Iraq, civilian supremacy in the highest councils of the state currently implies that the Iraqi policy toward the Kurds has stiffened and that the government has closed doors to a negotiated settlement. It further implies that the so called "rejection front" of the Palestinians has been strengthened and could expect increased aid from Iraq. The point we are endeavoring to make is that the tools of analysis which have been developed and tested in the West are often inapplicable in understanding the non-Western societies. Turning to Iraq once again, although it is important to know which faction of the Baath--civil or military --is winning in the struggle for power, it is more important to know the ideological and philosophical orientations of the individuals who assume the major roles. A civilian might prove to be more rabidly militant in his approach to social and foreign problems than his military counterpart. Therefore, we must not necessarily associate civilian control with a prelude to relaxation of internal or external tension. Iraqi, as well as Egyptian and Syrian, societies are like most modern societies, highly complex; they cannot be simply classified into "dictatorial regime," "autocratic rule," "single-party state," or any other of the scores of classifications available to Western analysts. These societies can best be understood through the prism of their culture, tradition, and history.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Interest Groups

Like any other society faced by the challenges of modernization and industrialization, the Egyptian society is divided into a variety of ideological, class, professional, religious, and other segments, each seeking to protect as well as to promote its own vested interests. The existence of this division has been recognized by the Egyptian constitution, which prescribes representation of the workers, farmers, intelligentsia, soldiers, and the national capitalists in the People's Assembly (the country's legislative body) as well as in the Arab Socialist Party (ASU), the sole political organization permitted to function in the country. Having recognized this division, the constitution goes on to state that "social solidarity" is the basis of society. In other words, "social solidarity" is an ideal and a goal that the constitution urges the Egyptian policy-makers to achieve by means of reconciling the ideological, class, and other differences that may exist among the various groups in the country. Thus, the Egyptian policy-makers must make decisions in an environment which assumes the existence of

social conflict. In addition to the interest groups recognized by the constitution, there are others, which though not given the same merit as the former, play an important role in the decision-making process of the country.

These include the bureaucracy, the *ulema*, and ideological and religious affiliations. Most if not all of these groups are theoretically subsumed under one or another category included in the constitution. In practice, however, the non-recognized affiliations endeavor to articulate their respective interests as separate units rather than as components of such indeterminable categories as the intelligentsia or workers. For example, it would be difficult to place the *ulema* in the category of intelligentsia, peasants, workers, or soldiers. Under the Egyptian system, the *ulema* fall in the category of "intelligentsia," which also subsumes leftist and socialist writers and revolutionaries whose perceptions of Egyptian interests and goals are inherently opposed to that of the *ulema*. Traditionally and educationally, the *ulema* are a conservative force committed to maintaining traditional religious values in the country. Thus, neither the *ulema* nor the leftist intellectuals are content with the coexistence imposed by the constitution. Therefore, each group, seeking ways and means to advance and consolidate its own interests, is involved in political activities at the various levels of the Egyptian system.

The military, on the other hand, which is recognized as a separate interest group, has many internal factions based on personality conflicts as well as on differences of opinion on military tactics and strategy and on the sources of weapons acquisition. This means that no single group of military men can confidently claim to be the spokesman of the armed forces. Therefore, the dissident groups seek independent methods of influencing the decision-making process of the country. These methods have included threats and attempted use of violence as well as the public airing of differences. Although published reports indicate the existence of military groups that are allegedly pro-Soviet, pro-U.S., pro-Libya, or pro-Iraq, it would be counterproductive to classify these groups as such. These military groups are composed of young Egyptian nationalists who grew up during the era of Nasserite fervor for Arab unity, Arab pride, and Arab manifest destiny. The so-called pro-Soviet or pro-U.S. military officers are in reality just pro-Egypt and would like to acquire weapons from one

superpower or the other in an effort to achieve an Egyptian goal of recovering the lost Arab territories and to become a preponderant military power in the Middle East.

So far we have identified the following interest groups, some of which are recognized as such by the Egyptian constitution; other groups exist either within the broad recognized categories or come into existence on an *ad hoc* basis around substantive issues.

1. peasants
2. workers
3. soldiers
4. the intelligentsia
5. national capitalists
6. the bureaucracy
7. *ulema*

Although the last two categories are not recognized components of the "alliance of the people's working force,"¹ they play a significant role in the formulation and implementation of Egyptian policy.

Having identified major interest groups in Egypt, we should briefly discuss the degree of freedom afforded these groups to pursue their respective self-interest. A word of caution should be repeated lest the above discussion misguide the reader into perceiving the Egyptian system as a "multiparty" system working under the umbrella of the Arab Socialist Union. We should remember that terms such as "interest groups" are being used here to facilitate our understanding of a decision-making system that did not come into existence through evolution and tradition but was imposed from above. The interest groups have not yet crystallized into cohesive and cogent "classes" capable of clearly defining and articulating their class interests. The role of interest articulation rests on a handful of persons who have limited access to their respective constituents. These "constituents," furthermore, do not always readily associate themselves with the interest groups to which they are officially assigned.

Reverting to our discussion of the degree of freedom allowed these interest groups, it would not be inaccurate to say that the freedom of most of these groups is limited to expressing their views within the context of ASU's charter. Individually, these groups may not own or operate newspapers or other means of mass media. All important newspapers and magazines, as

¹Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, article 5. Text in *Record of the Arab World*. (July-December 1971) pp. 2847-2862.

well as broadcasting stations, are owned and controlled by the government, although the four largest publishing houses--al-Ahram, Dar al-Hilal, Dar Akhbar al-Yom, and Dar al-Gomhouriya--function as separate commercial entities and compete with each other for shares of advertising space and circulation.

In terms of freedom of expression and freedom to know, the Egyptian press does not enjoy as much freedom in the area of foreign relations as it does in domestic affairs. After decades of censorship during the monarchy and Nasser's regime, the Egyptian press was given "full" freedom in recent months. This "freedom," however, is in reality "unlimited" in domestic affairs and "limited" in the realm of foreign policy. Within the realm of domestic politics, the Egyptian press has been allowed to express adverse views on even such "sacred" subjects as Nasser and the one-party system, and favorable views on a multiparty system, monarchy, aristocrats, and the Communist party, among others. In the field of foreign affairs, however, the Egyptian press is restricted to expressing from favorable-to-neutral opinion on the administration's major foreign policy goals. In this field, the press usually expresses the administration's views. If, however, an independent and strong-willed editor, al-Haikal, for example, dares to oppose the government's foreign policy, he is promptly removed from his position of influence. Only the Egyptian government can and does use the media for expounding its views on the country's foreign policy. Interest groups have little means of conveying their foreign policy views to the public. However, they may, through their elected representatives, express their views in the ASU or the People's Assembly meeting but they have little chance to make them known in the media, particularly when these views do not coincide with those of the government. This, however, should not be construed to imply that the Egyptian government can or does ignore views of important interest groups or of individuals in the country. Rather, what it means is that the government, both for domestic and external policy reasons, wants to give the impression of unity in foreign policy. In terms of foreign policy goals, this impression of unity would not necessarily be a distorted one. There are hardly any Egyptian groups or individuals of stature who differ significantly with current foreign policy goals of the govern-

ment: the recovery of Arab lands from Israel, the settlement of the Palestinian issue, Arab unity, and neutralism in the East-West conflict. Admittedly, a dissonance between the government and certain interest groups exists in the selection of appropriate means to achieve the foreign policy goals, but there are hardly any disagreements on the state's foreign policy goals. For example, several generals of the Egyptian military have opposed President Sadat's heavy reliance on U.S. diplomacy in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. This opposition is not based on ideological but strategic considerations that clearly argue against closing the Russian armament supply door before either a peace settlement or finding another source of sophisticated weapons--prospects for neither of which are presently encouraging. Similarly, certain groups might be involved in a mutual struggle to affect Egyptian relations with regional powers--e.g., Saudi Arabia vs. Libya and Iraq vs. Syria.

In conclusion, it may be stated that several interest groups actively participate in the decision-making process of Egypt. Moreover, the bureaucratic as well as the political elites are duly responsive to significant demands of these groups.

Linguistically, religiously, and ethnically, Egypt is a relatively homogenous society. More than 98 percent of the population speak Arabic; the rest speak Nubian and Berber. About 90 percent of the population are adherents of Sunni Islam; the remaining are divided into a variety of Christian churches, the native Coptic Church being predominant among them.² Although a handful of Jews still live in Egypt, they do not play a significant role in the country. Generally, the relationship between the Copts and the Muslims has been cordial, although occasional friction and even violent clashes have taken place in the distant as well as in the immediate past.

²The American University, Foreign Area Studies, *Area Handbook for United Arab Republic (Egypt)* (Washington D.C. : GPO, 1970), p. viii. The Coptic-Muslim relations have not always been peaceful and accommodating; the two communities have had many bloody clashes over the past decades; the latest such clash occurred in November, 1972. Despite the efforts on the part of the Egyptian government and political parties, such as the WAFD, to create harmonious relations between the two religious communities in the country, the latent mutual antagonism between the Coptic and Muslim clergy has prevented a lasting reconciliation between the two groups. A pro-Coptic view may be conveniently found in Edward Wakin, *A Lonely Minority* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1963); also see the Senate statement of Shawky F. Karas on behalf of the American Coptic Association, on July 24, 1974, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Foreign Assistance Authorization*, S.3394, 93rd Congress, 2nd session, 1974, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1974), pp. 371-374.

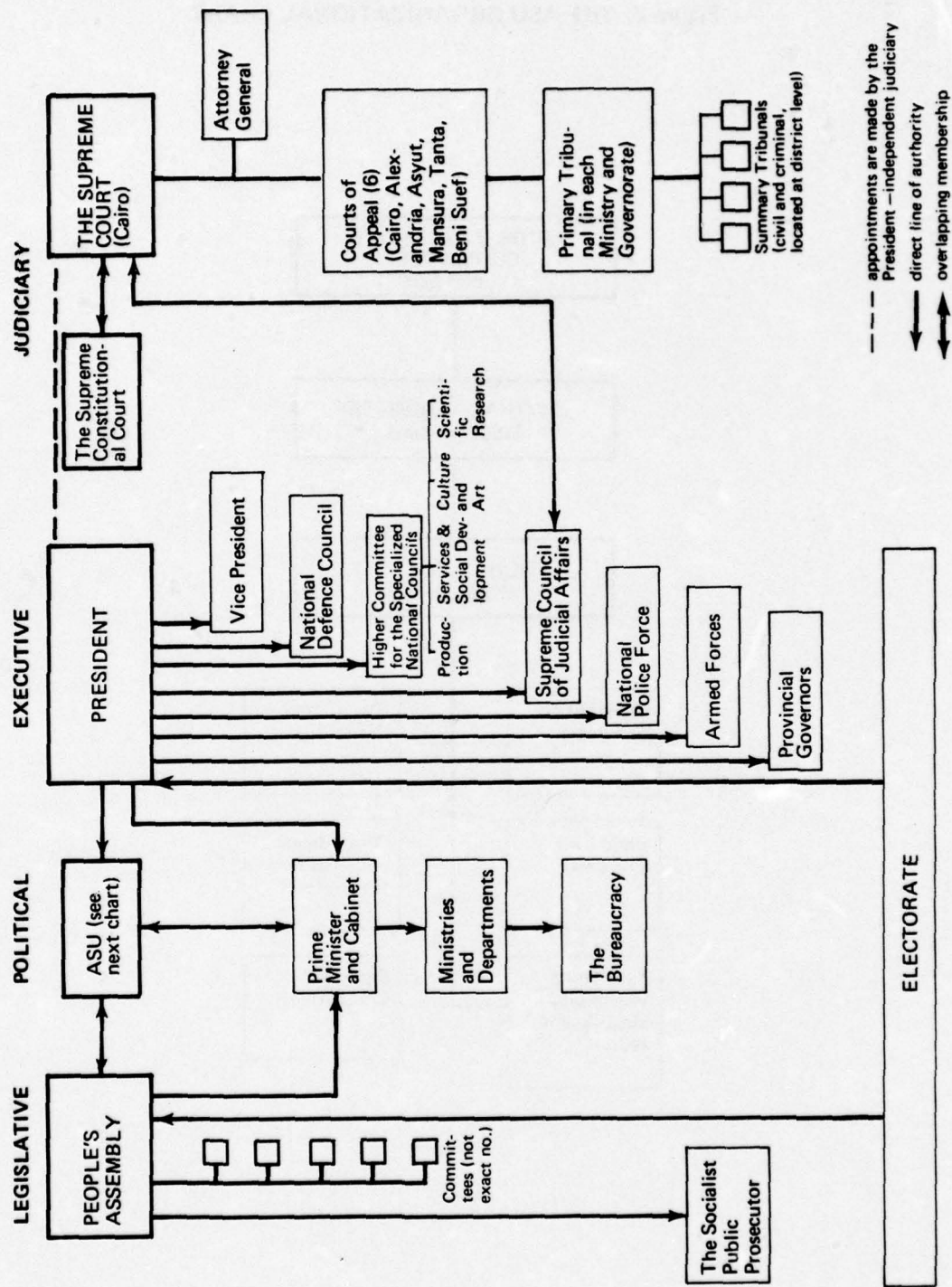
These clashes, however, are not as intense or serious as, say the Kurdish-Arab conflict in Iraq or the friction between the Alawites and the Sunnis in Syria.

Economically and socially, Egypt is not as homogenous as it is linguistically and ethnically. Although the official line denies the existence of a class struggle in the country, at least two Egyptian "leftist" intellectuals analyze their society from a Marxist perspective that sees the country engaged in an "inevitable" class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.³ In an effort to create social cohesion and to alleviate economic disparity between the super-rich and wretchedly poor, the Nasser administration instituted a series of reform laws, which, although denying the existence of a class struggle, called for a redistribution of the national wealth through such methods as minimum and maximum wages; social security benefits; profit-sharing with workers; and nationalization of all major means of production, distribution, transportation, and international trade and commerce.

Nasser had hoped that through these methods, which he called Arab Socialism, Egypt, while industrializing and modernizing its economy, would avoid the class and social conflicts which arise in the process of a redistribution of national wealth and political power. Nasser had come to realize that without domestic peace and social cohesion, Egypt would not be able to face successfully the challenges posed by industrialization. It was this desire for social cohesion which strengthened Nasser's and Sadat's determinations to disallow a multiparty system in the country. This system, in the pre-revolutionary period, was directly held responsible for governmental instability and the consequent failure of a parliamentary system in Egypt. Thus, the Egyptian leaders have sought to create and maintain social cohesion by means of consensus, theoretically arrived at through discussions and compromises between competing groups represented in the Arab Socialist Union.

Although the utility of this concept (consensus, *ijma*) as a method of making laws in Egypt cannot be readily ascertained, it is evident that this concept, because of its close association with the Islamic law,

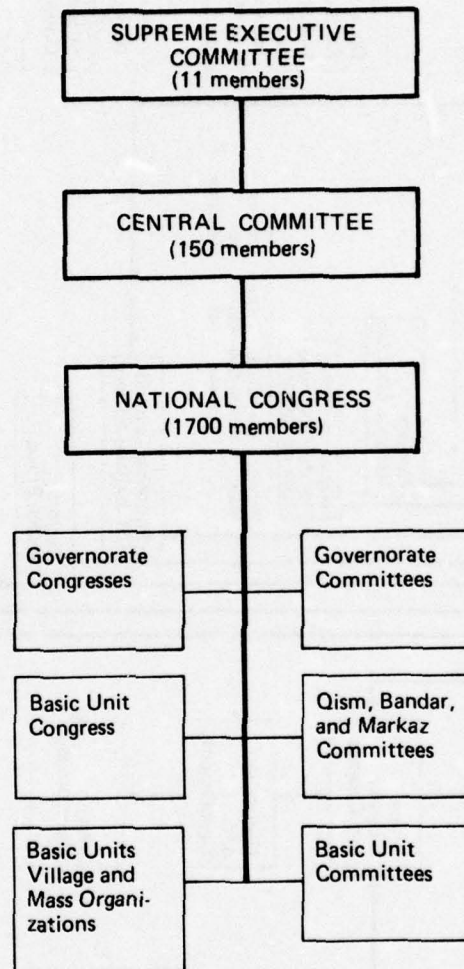
³ Anwar Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society* (New York, N.Y. : Random House, 1968); and Mahmud Hussein, *Class Conflict in Egypt: 1945-1971* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1973). The latter writer is usually labelled as a Marxist of pro-Chinese orientation.



Source: Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Figure 1. STRUCTURE OF THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT

Figure 2. THE ASU ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



is more acceptable to most Egyptians than a purely Western political concept for making laws.⁴ The Egyptian government has endeavored to make this connection between consensus and the Islamic law clear among the populace, thus winning their approval of the system.⁵

Although many anti-government demonstrations by the students and workers have taken place during the last seven or eight years, the Egyptian government seemingly commands the respect and popular support of the people. As a result of the 1973 October War, which evidently restored the self-respect and confidence of the Arabs, the Egyptian government has further consolidated its control of the country and it has received more popular support than ever before considered possible. It should, however, be noted that this support is primarily for President Sadat as the leader credited for the success of the Egyptian military in the initial stages of the war. Since he has become the focus of public support as well as criticism, the future stability and course of action of the Egyptian government will entirely depend on the success or failure of his current policies. If he fails and loses his legitimacy and support, the Egyptian governmental system might undergo a radical change both in substance and personnel.

The Bureaucracy

Egypt is governed by a republican form of government with executive powers concentrated in the office of the president. He is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces as well as commander of the national police force--in other words, he controls the state's monopoly of coercive power.

⁴ *Ijma* (consensus) is one of the four main sources of the Islamic law. Others sources are: the Quran, the Hadith (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) and *ijtihad* (interpretation by qualified persons). *Qiyas* (analogy) is another source acceptable to some doctors of law.

⁵ See Nasser's speeches on special occasions, such as anniversaries of the July Revolution, birthdays of the Prophet Muhammad, and Eids. Nasser focused on this concept during his confrontation with the Egyptian Communists who opposed his methods of achieving consensus by merging all political parties into a single party as an instrument of conflict resolution. See R.H. Dekmejian, *Egypt Under Nasser* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1971); Mohamed Heikal, *The Cairo Documents* (New York: Doubleday, 1973); Anthony Nutting, *Nasser* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1972); and Chapter 9 in R.D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), pp. 275-313.

In formulating and implementing the state's policies, the president is assisted by a council of ministers, which he appoints under a prime minister. The council of ministers, including the prime minister, are confirmed by the People's Assembly. The president is nominated for a six-year term by two-thirds vote of the People's Assembly and confirmed by a national plebiscite in which he must receive an absolute majority of the votes of those taking part in the referendum. He may be reelected for a similar consecutive term.⁶

The Egyptian constitution provides for an independent judicial system with four tiers of summary tribunals, primary tribunals, courts of appeal, and the supreme court. In addition, there is an autonomous supreme constitutional court with jurisdiction over matters relating to the constitutionality of new laws and bills.⁷

The legislative branch of the Egyptian governmental structure is headed by the People's Assembly whose members are elected through direct general elections and secret ballot. Although it is not specifically prescribed in the constitution, the ASU has traditionally controlled the nomination and election of assembly members all of whom have been "active" members of the Socialist Union. The constitution requires that the Assembly must have at least 350 members, 50 percent of whom must be workers and peasants. The People's Assembly is elected for a term of five years. Although the Assembly is empowered to approve or reject the state's general budget, it cannot amend the draft budget except with the approval of the government.⁸

The People's Assembly has a number of permanent and *ad hoc* working

⁶For details of election procedures, presidential powers, and the council of minister's relationship with the People's Assembly and the president, see the Egyptian Constitution (1971), articles 73-152.

⁷Articles 165-178.

⁸Articles 86, 114, and 116. For the first time in October 1971, the ASU did not propose a list of candidates for the general election to the People's Assembly. The ASU left the door open to any member of the party to seek election to the assembly. In this election, 1,533 candidates participated; 338 were elected and 12 were appointed by the president for the six districts in Sinai and the Suez Canal under Israeli occupation. Some of these candidates were not members of the ASU but were allowed by Sadat to join the party so that they might compete in the election. 53 per cent of the seats were won by farmers and workers, (*Record* [July-December 1971] pp. 2803-64).

committees which hold hearings on matters that are pending before the assembly; based on the discussions of the issues with suitable spokesmen, the committees make their recommendations to the Assembly, which then takes appropriate action. The task of implementing the decisions of the Assembly, the cabinet, and other top decision-making bodies, such as the National Defense Council and the Specialized National Councils, is assigned to the various ministries and departments of the central government. The People's Assembly supervises the activities of the socialist public prosecutor who is responsible "for taking measures guaranteeing the rights of the people, insuring the safety of society and its political system, safeguarding Socialist gains, and enforcing Socialist conduct."⁹ It is interesting to note that the armed forces, in addition to their traditional role of defense, are also assigned the task of protecting the socialist gains of the people's struggle.¹⁰

Although the 1971 constitution had provided for the creation of specialized national councils, these councils did not come into being until June 1974 when a republic decree brought them into existence and defined their powers and their relationship with other organs of the government. These councils are for: (1) production and economic affairs; (2) services and social development; (3) culture, arts, literature, and information; (4) education, scientific research, and technology.¹¹ The Higher Committee for the Specialized National Councils has been assigned the task of coordinating the activities of these councils and of preparing reports on studies, proposals, and recommendations made by the councils. Dr. Muhammad Abd al-Qadir Hatim, assistant to the president, has been appointed chairman of the Higher Committee for the Specialized National Councils. It is with the help of these studies, reports, and recommendations by the councils that the Egyptian government hopes to draw up stable, long-term, national policies and plans. These councils, in coordination with the Higher Committee, will also assess the work accomplished and approve the annual plan of action by the departments and ministries. The president will chair the annual meetings' schedule to adopt and recommend policies and plans for the country.¹²

⁹Article 179. Dr. Mostafa Abu Said was the socialist prosecutor general responsible for preparing indictments against May 1971 conspirators against the Sadat regime.

¹⁰Article 180.

¹¹The president of the republic has the discretion of creating more specialized councils whenever necessary.

¹²*Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, (FBIS) 3 June 1974, pp. D11-12.

The Arab Socialist Union

As indicated earlier, the Arab Socialist Union* is the sole political party sanctioned under the Egyptian constitution. Although Article 55 of the constitution permits Egyptian citizens to form societies within limits of the law, the scope of their political activities is practically non-existent, because only the ASU is entitled to act politically. In other words, politically active groups must confine their activities within the prescribed limits and the organizational structure of the party which is said to represent the "alliance" of the peasants, workers, soldiers, the intelligentsia, and the national capitalists; the peasants and workers are entitled to at least 50 percent of the membership in all the various organizations of the ASU. In 1971, the ASU was reported to have approximately six million members.¹³

The ASU consists of a National Congress of 1,700 delegates elected by the people. The congress elects a 150-member Central Committee which in turn elects an 11-man Higher Executive Committee. The Central Committee is divided into functional subcommittees which draw up and, theoretically, direct the country's domestic as well as foreign policies.¹⁴ Both Nasser and Sadat have held key positions in the ASU; chairmanship of the Union, chairmanship of the National Congress and chairmanship of the Higher Executive Committee. Other key positions such as secretary-general of the National Congress, chairmanship of the Central Committee and functional subcommittees are often, if not always, held by close associates of the president.¹⁵

* In December 1974, Sadat announced that the structure of the ASU will be completely reorganized.

¹³ *Record of the Arab World* (July-December 1971), p. 2841.

¹⁴ *An Nahar Arab Report*, vol. 1, no. 21 (July 27, 1970).

¹⁵ In the May 1971, conspiracy against President Sadat, the secretary-general of ASU, Abdel Mohsin Abdel Nur was one of the 120 accused of the plot to overthrow the regime. Three other members of the Executive Committee were also allegedly involved in the conspiracy--Mohammed Labib Shoqair, speaker of the National Assembly; Diaeddin Mohammed Dawud and Sharawi Jomaa, minister of the interior. All were found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment; Nur received 15 years with hard labor, Dawud was given 10 years with hard labor, and Shoqair received one year with labor. Jomaa was sentenced to death (it was commuted to life imprisonment with hard labor). For a list of the accused and the sentences they received, see *Record of the Arab World* (July-December, 1971) pp. 2837-2841.

Immediately after Abdel Nur's arrest, Sadat appointed Dr. Mohammed Dakruni as acting secretary-general of the ASU; a few days later, he was replaced by Dr. Aziz Sidqi as acting secretary-general. Later Sayyed Mirei was elected secretary-general of the ASU.

Although we are not certain about the degree and effectiveness of control these subcommittees exercise over the bureaucracy in its daily routine work, it is evident that these subcommittees play a significant role in social conflict resolution by reconciliation and compromise and in eliminating the opposition from positions of responsibility. Purges of prominent members of ASU take place in these subcommittees whose recommendations for disciplinary action are almost always confirmed by the National Congress. After the May 1971 affair, the ASU was reorganized by Sadat who also ordered new elections for the political party of the country. These steps allowed Sadat to consolidate his hold on the country's popular organization by eliminating his opponents from key positions in the ASU hierarchy. The following examples are cited to indicate the degree and scope of influence ASU subcommittees exercise in Egyptian life. In August 1971, workers at the Helwan Iron and Steel Works went on a strike, causing serious dislocation in the production schedule of this industrial complex. After suppressing the striking workers who demanded better working conditions, Sadat asked the ASU to investigate the labor union at the complex, the management, and the ASU Unit Committee at the Helwan Works. The recommendations of the investigating committee involved disciplinary actions against officials of the management as well as those of the labor union and the ASU basic unit committee at the complex. All recommendations were implemented by the executive branch headed by Sadat.¹⁶

Another manifestation of Sadat's firm control of the ASU and the party subcommittees' role in eliminating the opposition was the expulsion from the party of 89 prominent and middle echelon leaders for their alleged "deviationism" and for having contacts with foreigners. The key figure of the subcommittee was reported to be a Mohammed Osman Ismail, an anti-Communist rural landlord who served as Sadat's adviser for parliamentary affairs.¹⁷ During this purge, several journalists, literary writers, authors,

¹⁶Record (July-December, 1971) pp. 2846-2847.

¹⁷Mohammed Osman Ismail was at the time an assistant secretary general of the ASU. In addition to his role in the disciplinary committee, he was also allegedly active in organizing a group of "rightist" students who were reported trained in Libya to fight against the leftist student groups. The other Egyptian allegedly involved in this project was Ashraf Marwan, Sadat's adviser on information. See *An Nahar Arab Report*, vol. 4 no. 6 (continued)

film makers, and actors were deprived of their membership in the ASU. All of them were known for their "leftist-Communist" leanings. Half of the 89 purged were in the field of communications. This meant, for most of them, the loss of their jobs because party membership was a prerequisite for working in this field. Despite Heikal's efforts to protect a number of writers and contributors in *Al-Ahram*, this paper lost at least eight staff members and contributors who were accused of being "deviationists" and of having contact with foreigners. Jim Hoagland suggests that one reason *Al-Ahram* was so severely hit by the purge was that Osman Ismail and Heikal were in conflict on the issue of Sadat's expulsion of the Russian technicians and advisers in July 1972. The two had reportedly clashed during a debate on the issue in an ASU Central Committee meeting in August 1972. Heikal had allegedly ridiculed Osman Ismail who tried to hit back by purging several of Heikal's journalist friends and associates.¹⁸

The organizational network of the Arab Socialist Union extends pyramidically throughout the country, with the Executive Committee at its apex and the basic units at the bottom of the configuration. In between the two extremes are, from the top: the Central Committee, the National Congress, the governorate and district levels committees, below which are the basic units located in factories, communities and villages.

Because the top leadership of the ASU, the People's Assembly, and the executive branch, including the Council of Ministers' imbricates, there are visible signs of meaningful cooperation between the political party

¹⁷ *con't* (February 5, 1973); Jim Hoagland, "Egyptians Fear that Sadat will Return to 'Rule by the Whip,'" *The Washington Post*, February 19, 1973.

The chairman of this powerful subcommittee was Hafez Badawi, speaker of the People's Assembly. In 1971, he presided over the First Chamber of the Revolution Court, which tried the more than 100 conspirators against the Sadat regime.

Because 6 of its 12 members were expelled from the ASU, the Egyptian Press Syndicate was temporarily dissolved. The Press Syndicate had supported the student demonstration and pressured for an end to press censorship; this had reportedly angered Sadat who proceeded to take disciplinary action against the syndicate. Prominent among those accused of "deviation" and expelled from ASU were: Lutfi Kholi, editor of *at-Talia*, the leftist literary magazine published by *Al-Ahram*, and a member of the ASU Executive Committee; Ahmad Fuad Najm; Mahmoud Amin Alam; Dr. Ali Rai; Amal Dunqol; Ahmad Hijazi; Muhsinah Tawfiq; Alfred Faraj; Ali Abdul Khaleq; and Tharwat Abaza. (*An Nahar Arab Report*, vol. 4. [February 12, 1973]).

¹⁸ Jim Hoagland, *The Washington Post* (February 19, 1973).

on the one hand the executive and the legislative branches on the other. It would not be uncommon to see the Executive Committee of the ASU, which has as its members cabinet ministers and key legislators, make a statement of goals which would later be adopted as a government policy to be implemented by the bureaucracy. Reversely, a cabinet decision might as easily be accepted and adopted by the ASU Executive Committee or the Central Committee which might then advise its political and administrative machinery to disseminate the information for a "popular" response of the people to the government's policy.

This, however, should not be construed to imply that the ASU is a vanguard for recruiting top political leadership of the executive branch of the country. Dekmejian's study shows that of the 131 ministers who served in the cabinets between 1952 and 1968, only three held positions in the political organization prior to becoming ministers, while more than 80 held a party position either during or after their term as ministers.¹⁹ Thus, we tend to agree with the statement that describes Egyptian political alliances as "personal," "ad hoc," and lacking in solemn commitment to the movement of the party. This system has appropriately been called a "collaboration" movement that conceptually rests on the "principle of power concentration and dispersion." It allows concentration of power at the national level and permits subnational leaders residual powers primarily dealing with local and community affairs. This prevents the subnational leader from building a national image and from challenging the top echelon of the country.

This cooperation, however, does not seem to extend fully to either the subnational levels or to the various levels of the national and provincial bureaucracies, which tend to show resentment toward "outside" interference in their work. This resentment is usually expressed in the form of creating delays and obstacles in the way of carrying out orders from above. Realizing the existence of this rift between the party functionaries and the middle-to-upper level echelons of the bureaucracy, the ASU and its predecessors, the National Union and the Freedom Rally, have successively endeavored to enlist the sympathies and cooperation of key civilian bureaucrats at these levels; the ASU has over the years placed an increasing number of these

¹⁹ Dekmejian, *Egypt*, pp. 192-199.

bureaucrats in significant positions in the party hierarchy.²⁰

The Military

Although the Arab Socialist Union claims to represent the peasants, the workers, the intelligentsia, and the soldiers, the party's relationship with the armed forces has not been delineated. The armed forces have generally been represented in the ASU hierarchy by retired military officers who have played the role of defending their constituents against attacks by the leftists. Although the task of defining the ASU-military relationship was assigned to the Executive Committee of the party, the committee was unable to reconcile the differences between those who wanted to radicalize and politicize the armed forces and those who opposed such an indoctrination on the ground that it would alienate the officer corps, hurt their morale, and thus weaken and divide the forces into mutually hostile ideological groups.

After the June 1967 war and the subsequent relaxing of the press laws, the Egyptian military came under heavy public criticism lead by the leftist elements in the ASU. This group, which had been in favor of opening the military ranks to ASU recruitment, once again urged the government and the military hierarchy to eliminate the "exclusiveness" of the officers corps and to find effective methods by which links could be forged between the armed forces and the proposed popular defense army. It was a leftist conviction that without devising and implementing such a program for the armed forces, the country would not be able to resist foreign aggression and to recover the lost territory and prestige.

Initially, both Nasser and the military high command resisted these pressures, but finally they had to concede some ground to the critics of the armed forces. The student demonstrations in favor of creating a popular defense army and the Israeli attack on electrical installations in 1968 constrained Nasser to approve a popular defense army in the country. In January 1969, Nasser set up a committee, composed of three ex-officers-- Foreign Minister Mahmud Riyad, Interior Minister Sharawi Jomaa, and National Guidance Minister Muhammad Faiq--with the task of finding effective means

²⁰Iliya Harik, "The Single Party as a Subordinate Movement: The Case of Egypt," *World Politics*, vol. xxvi, no: 1 (October 1973), p. 81; Leonard Binder, "Political Recruitment and Participation in Egypt," chapter 8, *Political Parties and Political Development*, edited by Joseph Palombara and Myron Weiner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 219.

for strengthening the ties between the popular forces, as represented by the ASU, and the armed forces. This committee reportedly met with high ranking officers of the armed forces and elicited their views on the issue. As a result of these discussions and, more importantly, as a consequence of the 1967 defeat, the armed forces started a program of self-reform that emphasized, among other things, "the need for cohesion in each fighting unit between officers and men, and the imperativeness of ideological unity."²¹ Despite this declaration of intent on the part of the armed forces, the military ranks were not allowed to be an overt target of ASU indoctrination. This committee, having failed to find an acceptable solution to the problem of the manner of representation of the armed forces in the ASU, left the issue, once again, to the discretion of the party's higher executive committee, which has not yet, to the best of our knowledge, given its verdict on the case.

ISSUE AREAS

In addition to the various interest groups discussed above, which seem to divide the society vertically, there are several significant "issue areas" that cut across these interest groups horizontally and cause shifts in alignments and alliances of Egyptian elites and their respective constituents. As most of these interest groups tend to be rather amorphous, the intensity of competition appears less emotional and personal than it is in the struggle between the many exponents of the various issues confronting the country. Political, ideological, and economic issues tend to generate more emotional support than such formless interest groups as the intelligentsia, workers, and peasants. A particular political issue, such as Palestine, elicits wider and more demonstrative support than almost any aspect of the workers' and peasants' interests, the two groups which are officially assigned 50 per cent of the seats in the People's Assembly and the ASU. Similarly, the intelligentsia is not an ideologically cohesive group and thus its members tend to show deeper commitments to significant national issues than to their own amorphous interests.

The task of identifying certain groups of people with issue areas over an extended period of time is rendered more difficult when we observe interest contradictions in the political behavior of Egyptian individuals and groups actively participating in the system. For example, an educated Egyptian

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Dekmejian, *Egypt*, p. 256.

may be found to be simultaneously an exponent of rapid economic development, a supporter of the Qaddafiite variety of Islam, an advocate of closer ties with the Soviet Union and the socialist world, an opponent of Communist ideology, an anti-imperialist, for Arab unity, and a champion of a secular state in Palestine. Although some scholars have recognized the futility of dividing the Egyptian and Arab populations into neatly defined groups of "leftist," "rightist," and "moderate," others continue to discuss the Middle East regimes as well as publics in these terms.²²

Since the Egyptians along with other Arabs have been so incessantly preoccupied with the problem of Palestine and Israel, it becomes doubly difficult to separate the "true believer" from the pragmatist--especially in the politico-ideological field, an area of concern that has a direct bearing on the problems of Palestine and the Israeli-occupied Arab territories, Egyptian relations with the Soviet Union, the United States, and Europe, along with a host of other related issues confronting Egypt.

The major issues facing the Egyptians today may be grouped into the following four types: (1) territorial, (2) non-human resources, (3) human resources, and (4) status.

1. Territorial issues: this issue area includes the occupied Sinai, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank of the Jordan, including the Arab section of Jerusalem;

2. Non-human resources: included in this category are the issues pertaining to economic and industrial development, foreign investment, and international commerce and trade;

3. Human resources: this category subsumes such issues as education and training of the youth, the bureaucracy, business and military personnel;

4. Status: included here are such intangible issues as national prestige, the Egyptian perceptions of the country's role in the Middle East, and its relations with the super and other powers.

Territorial Issues

As far as the goals of the territorial issues are concerned, there is unanimity, among the Egyptians: they are committed to a complete recovery of the Arab lands occupied by Israel since 1967. This unanimity, however,

²²As a representative example of the former, see Michael W. Suleiman, "Attitudes of Arab Elite Toward Palestine and Israel," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 67, no. 2 (June 1973), pp. 482-489; examples of the latter may be found daily in the U.S. and European media.

does not extend to the means of achieving this goal. Nor is there a consensus on such questions as: Should Egypt concentrate its energy on recovering the Sinai first? Should Cairo insist on a simultaneous withdrawal from the Sinai and the Golan Heights? What about the West Bank and Jerusalem? Should Jerusalem be internationalized?

Over the last three decades, the Zionist-Israeli challenge has elicited a variety of approaches to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict: the Muslim Brotherhood approach that called for a return to the value system practiced during the early years of Islam; the Communist approach that rejected most traditional values and called for accepting the Soviet model of development; the Arab Unity approach (although this is the most popular approach, serious differences exist as to the methods of achieving this unity and the form it should take); the Palestinian resistance movement approach that calls for the establishment of a bi-racial polity in Palestine.²³

Due to a lack of popular support and strong opposition of the government, the Brotherhood as well as the Communist approaches were abandoned although small groups of sympathizers continue their covert activities in the country.²⁴ The other two approaches, namely, Arab unity and support for the Palestinian resistance, have remained popular among the Egyptians. The Arab unity approach is no longer based on the Nasserite conception of unity through popular pressure on other Arab governments; Sadat's approach to Arab unity is based on coordination of action and on reaching a consensus through consultation; there are no implied threats in Sadat's plea for Arab unity, as had often been the case during the Nasser regime. Although the Palestine resistance approach continues to be popular with the Egyptian masses, Sadat's apparent willingness to recognize Israel as an independent state, provided Israel gives up "every inch" of Arab occupied territory, seems to reflect a change in Egyptian objectives in Palestine.²⁵

²³Suleiman, "Attitudes of Arab Elite...." p. 485.

²⁴In August 1966, the last widely acknowledged leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayed Kotob, was executed by the Nasser regime on charges of plotting to overthrow the Egyptian government. In his effort to strengthen and enlarge his support in the country, President Sadat released from prison scores of Muslim Brothers in 1971. It was then reported that the recently released members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood were in the process of reorganizing their ranks. (*An Nahar Arab Report*, vol. 2, no. 37 [13 September 1971], p. 3). Khalid Mohieddin and Ali Baligh Sabri are two reputedly pro-Communist Egyptian leaders.

²⁵Sadat's interview with Reston, "Egyptian Leader Gives Conditions for Peace Accord," *The New York Times* (December 28, 1970), pp. 1 and 14.

Since 1967, the recovery of the Arab cities and lands under Israeli occupation has been an amaranthine goal of most Egyptians and Arabs. Nasser was firm about this, and Sadat has reiterated this time and again. There is, however, one major difference between Nasser's and Sadat's policies vis-à-vis the occupied territory: before he would agree to enter into negotiations with Israel, Nasser wanted a prior commitment that all Arab territories would be evacuated by the Israelis; and Nasser himself was unwilling to make concessionary statements to assuage Israeli apprehensions about the Arab designs for the Zionist state. Sadat modified the Egyptian policy by declaring his willingness to recognize Israel's existence as an independent state if Israel would return "every inch" of UAR territory captured in the Six Day War of June 1967. In addition, Sadat said that he would be immediately willing to negotiate Israel's "right of passage" through the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba. However, he linked Israel's "right of passage" through the Suez Canal with the settlement of the Palestinian problem which, he said, could be negotiated between the Arabs and Israel.²⁶

While Sadat made diplomatic efforts to recover the Sinai, he endeavored to strengthen the Egyptian armed forces on whom he would later depend in order to achieve a partial success in recovering a small portion of the Sinai.²⁷ Having exhausted his diplomatic efforts in Washington, Sadat moved to strengthen military ties with Syria for a joint military action against the Israeli forces in the occupied territory--in the Sinai and the Golan Heights. This military coordination with Syria and diplomatic coordination with other Arab states have rendered Sadat's policy less flexible than it was in the 1970-1971 period. After the October 1973 War, Sadat could no longer afford to talk about merely recovering "every inch" of territory taken from the UAR in 1967; as the senior partner in the Egyptian-Syrian military alliance, Sadat is constrained to insist on a concurrent recovery of the Sinai peninsula, the Golan Heights and, in the post-Rabat period, the West Bank of the Jordan for the Palestinians. Sadat could maintain the post-October 1973 popularity only by

²⁶ *The New York Times* (December 28, 1970), pp. 1 and 14; excerpts from this interview on page 15.

²⁷ In this interview, Sadat said that he had informed President Nixon, through King Hussain of Jordan and President Mohammed Yahya Khan of Pakistan, of Egypt's willingness for peace with Israel, provided Egypt is not asked "to surrender one inch of our land...."

firmly rejecting suggestions for a purely Egyptian solution to the Sinai peninsula. In this context, it should be noted that Sadat's policy of seeking the return of Arab territories through U.S. good offices has formidable foreign as well as domestic foes who scornfully reject the idea of achieving peace with what they call the "Zionist enemy" state.²⁸

Non-Human Resources

As in the case of the territorial issues, so in the context of the issues pertaining to non-human resources, the Egyptians, like most peoples of the developing states, are in complete agreement on the necessity and urgency of economic development through rapid industrialization of the country. The disagreements here, as in many other areas, stem from the opposing methods proffered by the proponents of various models of economic development: the Russian model, the Chinese model, the mixed model, the capitalist model, and the Arab socialist model. Beginning with the socialist decrees of 1961, the Egyptian government embarked on a number of large-scale development plans financed entirely by the public sector: it promulgated a series of new laws and regulations designed to narrow the income gap between the top and bottom income brackets by establishing a maximum-minimum income scale for all private and public income earners in the country; put into effect a profit-sharing plan for most profit-making industries; and placed worker-leaders on the management boards of the nationalized industries. These and other similar measures evidently satisfied the demands of the workers and trade unions and that of some socialist elements in the country who had been urging the government to institute reforms in these and other areas.

²⁸The foreign Arab opponents of Sadat's policy are collectively known as the "rejection front." In addition to the four Palestinian groups--the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), and the Palestinian Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)--the governments of Iraq and Libya are opposed to Sadat's policy. Domestically, the opposition comes from the Sabri-Mohyieddin group as well as from individuals such as Mohamed H. Heikal, the former editor-in-chief of the influential *Al-Ahram*, and the little-known leader of an obscure Egyptian student-group, Saleh Abdullah Sareyah. Reliable but unconfirmed reports indicate that a group of military officers has let President Sadat know that it opposes his total reliance on the U.S. for the recovery of the Arab territories. *An Nahar Arab Report*, vol. 5, no. 18 (May 6, 1974) p. 4.

Although they moved Egypt toward a state-capitalist economy, these steps did not completely satisfy the proponents of the Soviet model of development and alienated the private capitalists who found it increasingly difficult to sustain growth under new laws and regulations. Despite the dissatisfaction expressed by the opponents of the Egyptian government's economic and industrial policies, the country showed a sustained growth in the industrial sector, which grew at an impressive annual rate of 16 per cent during the 1960s. As the country progressively moved toward establishing a series of heavy and medium sized industries, the direct contribution of the state to industrial finance in the form of new investments grew from 83 million Egyptian pounds between December 1957 and June 1960, to 516.5 million between July 1960 and June 1965. The June 1967 war constrained the Egyptian government to divert a larger portion of the public funds to the military sector, thereby reducing its direct contribution to the industrial sector to 507.2 million between June 1967 and June 1970.²⁹ Notwithstanding the difficulties faced by Egypt in attracting large-scale foreign investment from the Western industrial states, there has not been and probably will not be any significant departure from the heavy reliance on the public sector in the country's development planning. Both the Transition Plan (1 July 1974 to 31 December 1975) and the Ten Year Plan (1 January 1973 to 31 December 1982) clearly show that the public sector will continue to dominate the country's economic development planning during the next ten years. During this period, private investment will probably not total more than 10 to 15 per cent of a total investment of 8,400 million Egyptian pounds (\$19.2 billion).³⁰

In an effort to stimulate foreign investments, the government announced a new code that gives special guarantees to Arab and other foreign investors against expropriation and takeover, facilitates the import of machinery and equipment required for projects, permits the expatriation of a portion of the profits, and establishes industrial and financial free zones in certain parts of the country. These and other "liberal" actions elicited favorable and critical comments from domestic and foreign opponents of these measures. In an effort to discredit the Sadat government for its "liberal" policies, his critics charged that the new laws, designed to attract foreign capital,

²⁹*An Nahar* vol. 2, no. 18 (3 May 1971).

³⁰*An Nahar* vol. 3, no. 39 (25 September 1972); John Waterbury, *A Note on Egypt: 1973*, American Universities Field Staff, Northeast Africa Series, vol. xviii, no. 4 (July 1973).

were aimed at eradicating the socialist gains achieved during President Nasser's regime. Leading Egyptian leftists such as Lewis Awad and Lutfi Kholi, who are alleged to have encouraged student demonstrations against the government, were leading critics of President Sadat's new policies. Kamal Chatilla, Secretary-General of the Union of the People's Working Forces, Lebanon's largest Nasserite organization, expressed public displeasure at the appearance of anti-Nasser articles in the government-controlled Egyptian press.³¹ The General Federation of Egyptian Workers was reported to have issued a statement condemning Sadat's reforms, but the censorship was alleged to have suppressed it.³²

In an endeavor to persuade its critics that the policies being followed were not only not anti-Nasser but were in fact a continuation of Nasser's policies, the Egyptian government issued statements designed to show its continuous adherence to the principles of Egyptian Socialism as envisaged by the late President Nasser. In this connection, President Sadat met with Kamal Chatilla and other prominent Nasserites and personally assured them of his determination to keep Egypt on the development path set by Nasser.³³ It was not so much the liberalization of trade and commerce which agitated the government's critics, rather it was the allegations of torture and injustices allegedly suffered by innocent people during Nasser's regime that perturbed the Nasserites because of their close association with the regime of the late president of Egypt. Furthermore, Egyptian writers openly questioned several aspects of Nasser's "reforms" and urged the government to take corrective action in such areas as sequestration and political parties. While some writers called for an end to sequestration and one party system, others urged the rehabilitation of Nahas Pasha, the late Egyptian prime minister who served under King Farouk, and some

³¹*The Arab World* (March 28, 1974), p. 7. Although a number of pro-Nasserite Lebanese issued statements critical of the Egyptian press for anti-Nasser propaganda and the Sadat regime for undoing the socialist gains in Egypt, other prominent Lebanese politicians such as Dr. Amin al-Hafiz and other pro-Nasserites have indicated their support of Sadat's domestic policies. FBIS, quoting *An Nahar* of 7 April, (12 April 1974), p. D-4.

³²Victor Zorza, "Kremlin Firing Back," *The Washington Post*, 23 April 1974, p. A-15.

³³*The Arab World* (28 March 1974) p. 7. *Al-Ahram* also assured him that the recent calls for taking corrective measures for the past mistakes did not imply personal criticism of Nasser.

members of the former royal family who were innocent of any wrongdoing against the country.³⁴

The Soviet Union, with whom Sadat's relations have been less than cordial since he ousted the Russian advisers in July 1972, was also reported to have expressed anxiety about the introduction of private foreign capital in the Egyptian economy. Foreign private capital, the Soviets feared, would weaken the Egyptian public sector which had been expanding with the help of Soviet credits during the past ten years. Dr. Abdel Aziz Higazi, deputy premier and minister of economy, denying the reports that the public sector under the new laws would retreat in favor of the private sector, endeavored to reassure Moscow that private foreign capital would work in harmony with the Egyptian economic plans designed to achieve socialism in the country.³⁵ In an address to the People's Assembly, Higazi said that there was no contradiction between permitting foreign capital investments and socialist ideology because the country's socialist system recognized various types of capital ownership--public ownership, private ownership and the investment of foreign capital in the form of aid, loans, or direct investments.³⁶

Human Resources

Egyptian disagreements in this area have occasionally surfaced in the form of student riots and in the form of public debates between the exponents of various schools of thought on education, training of the country's youth for the military and civilian services. Since this, as well as other issue areas, are substantively linked with the larger political and economic

³⁴Dr. Demerdash Ahmed attacked the sequestration laws and noted several instances of injustice and torture suffered by Egyptian citizens under the Nasser regime; his article appeared in *AL Ahram* after Heikal had been removed from its editorship; Ibrahim Saadeh, *Akhar AL-Yawm*, urged the government to allow the formation of opposition parties in the interest of the country's political development; Ali Amin, *AL-Ahram*, hoped that one day Egypt might have a new party system which "is the fastest way to produce the sound view;" Ahmed Hamroush editor of weekly *Rose al-Youssef*, called for the rehabilitation of Nahas Pasha and made favorable remarks about members of the former royal family of Egypt. See *The Arab World* (1 March 1974) pp. 11-12, (28 March 1974) p. 7, (26 February 1974); and FBIS (27 August 1974) p. D-6. Sayed Marei, an assistant to the President and a former first secretary of ASU, also called for the establishment of an opposition party in Egypt. Sadat rejected his counsel and "encouraged" him to take up the post of Secretary-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Rome. *The Arab World* (15 January 1974) p. 7.

³⁵"Soviets Question Egypt's Economic Policy," *The Arab World* (26 March 1974) p. 5.

³⁶*AL Yawm* (28 April 1974) as reported in *The Arab World* (30 April, pp. 9-10). Dr. Ismail Sabri, Minister of Planning, made a similar statement in an interview in *Rose AL Youssef*, *The Arab World* (4 July 1974) pp. 9-10.

factors, the debate on these subjects usually assumes ideological and political coloration. Even student demands for educational reforms often divided the students into ideological groups--usually identified as the leftist, rightist, and moderate groups. These groups are supported by powerful non-university groups, and in some cases by foreign governments. As mentioned above, Ashraf Marwan and Mohammed Osman Ismail were reported to be directly involved in organizing "secret" student bodies, which were being trained to thwart the activities of the leftist groups in the universities.³⁷ The so-called leftist student groups were linked with such national leaders as Ali Sabri, Khaled Mohieddin, and the leftist press. Since the Egyptian students are highly politicized and their intra-group struggles often manifest ideological motivations and foreign support, one may ask whether they represent authentic nationalist sentiment? Although the Egyptian students who participated in the anti-government riots of January 1972 have been accused of receiving foreign monetary aid and of being influenced by the Marxists, the Leninists, and the Palestinian students in Egypt, the students themselves have rejected these charges, and they have insisted that their organizations reflect true nationalistic concern about the economic and political conditions in the country.³⁸ A student manifesto published at this time, expressing their concern about the continuation of press censorship and suppression of political dissent in the country, demanded:

³⁷ In 1970, Dr. Ashraf Marwan was President Sadat's private secretary. According to *An Nahar*, vol. 3, no. 50 (11 December 1970), Marwan was active in establishing a secret student organization which received special training in Japanese wrestling in army camps. Currently, Marwan is Sadat's Secretary for Foreign contacts. Mohammed Osman Ismail, assistant secretary general of ASU, was reported to be involved in the formation of another secret student body which received military training in Libya. It should be noted that these organizations were being formed at the time of the Libyan-Egyptian collaboration. Since this collaboration has been discontinued, it is assumed that overt Libyan support to these organizations has also ended and that the Egyptian government is now encouraging these groups to seek aid from other amenable sources such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirate.

³⁸ In January 1972, President Sadat accused the striking students of having received 16,00 Egyptian pounds from "foreign hands." He did not identify either the source of this aid nor the alleged recipient. Sayyed Mirei, first secretary of ASU Central Committee, alleged that Maoist and pro-Soviet Communists had penetrated the student movement. He reportedly told the PLO leader Yasser Arafat that 12,000 Palestinian students in Egypt were behind the anti-government student strikes. *An Nahar*, vol. 3, no. 5 (31 January 1972).

--Wholehearted support for commando organizations, including the reopening of their offices in Cairo and the release of the four commandos charged with assassinating Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi Tal.

--Full conscription and the formation of militia units.

--An end to censorship and domestic Secret Service activity.

--Continued suspension of diplomatic relations with West Germany.

--Nationalization of American Companies in Egypt (Foreign Minister Murad Ghaleb told students on January 22 that this would be illogical.)

--A ban on American imports.

--Strikes at U.S. interests within the Federation of Arab Republics (Egypt, Syria, and Libya), encouraging all Arab states to do the same.

--No expansion of the tourism industry.

--Disassociation of the Egyptian economy from international capitalist markets and imperialist concerns. That is, no links with the European Economic Community and no use of free zones.

--Confining imports to strategic and scientific equipment."³⁹

This manifesto also urged the government to withdraw its approval of UN resolution 242 and to end its efforts to seek diplomatic solution to the Arab-Israel conflict.

Although this minifesto did not express any opinion on Egyptian-Soviet relations, later reports indicate that some student groups were apprehensive about the country's total reliance on the Soviet Union for the acquisition of sophisticated weapon systems and the training of military personnel in the use of these weapons.⁴⁰ The so called right-wing student groups have on occasion displayed open hostility toward the Soviet Union and have often accused it of encouraging subversive activities in the country. This wing of the student movement is closely associated with such national leaders as Abdul Latif Baghdadi, Kamaluddin Husain, Hasan Ibrahim, and Zakaria Mohieddin.

These students, however, were not alone in criticizing the government for its "excessive" reliance on the Soviet Union, for its defense policy, and for maintaining press censorship in the country. In December 1972, a group of "right-wing" deputies made an orchestrated attack on the policies

³⁹ *An Nahar*, vol. 3, no. 5 (31 January 1972).

⁴⁰ *An Nahar*, vol. 3, no. 8 (21 February 1973), p. 2.

followed by Premier Aziz Sidki whose "presence in power" was considered to be "the sole guarantee for a minimum level of relations with the Soviet Union...."⁴¹ During this period, a committee of the People's Assembly declared that "to strike at local American concerns is an inevitable measure in view of the escalated U.S. aid to Israel and the hostile attitude to our cause."⁴² This committee urged Egypt, Syria, and Libya to take the lead in this direction.

It should be noted that the student demands had nothing to do with academic affairs or the campus life in general; these were political demands for effecting personnel and policy changes in domestic and foreign affairs. The student demonstrations and strikes during 1972 and the early part of 1973 were given prominence in the Egyptian press, which generally tended to be pro-student in its editorial comments. The student strikes and the press comments critical of the government's policies provoked Sadat into taking strong disciplinary measures against the student leadership as well as against a number of anti-government journalists who were arrested. With the exception of a student--Issam Ghazzah--who was reputed to have Brotherhood connections, all others arrested were allegedly leftist students and Communist writers and journalists. The detained students included a number of Palestinian and pro-Palestinian students active in the Egyptian student movement.⁴³

The issue of military training is of course tied to a political decision on the source of weapons acquisition and the willingness of the supplier to provide adequate in-country or foreign training for the officers of the recipient state. In Egypt, this question acquired significance soon after Nasser's decision to purchase Soviet weapons, an effective

⁴¹ *An Nahar*, vol. 3, no. 51 (18 December 1972), p. 1.

⁴² *An Nahar*, vol. 3, no. 52 (25 December 1972).

⁴³ The arrested students included Ahmad Bahaa, a founder of the "Palestine Revolution Partisan Group;" Ahmad Abdullah, member of the National Congress of ASU; Husain Saaduddin; Siham and Mohammed Tawfiqi; Sanaa Abdul Aziz; Sayyed Awad, chairman of the Cultural Committee of the Egyptian Federation of Students; Mohammad Khaled, editor of *Al-Rababi* published by the American University of Cairo; and Mohammad Dardiri. Twelve Palestinian students were also arrested, among them Khadri Shehadeh, a member of the Palestinian National Council, who was charged with engaging in publicity for the PFLP. *An Nahar* vol. 4, no. 3 (15 January 1973) p. 1.

use of which required training of the military personnel by Soviet instructors. Although a significant number of ranking officers were reported to have resisted the idea of exposing the non-commissioned and junior officers to Soviet training for fear of political indoctrination which might weaken the military discipline, the military needs and political imperatives constrained them to withdraw their objections. As a result, thousands of Egyptians were given military training initially by the Russian and later also by the Cuban and North Korean instructors. After the June 1967 Arab-Israel war, thousands of Russian military instructors and advisers were brought into Egypt for training Egyptian troops and, in the meantime, for maintaining the new equipment in operational condition for emergency. Because of the sensitive nature of the subject, this issue did not receive as much publicity in the Egyptian press as, for example, the question of Soviet weapons. It seems to us that it was much easier for the Egyptian government to create a consensus on the need for acquiring Soviet weapons than on the need for providing Soviet military training for the Egyptian military personnel. The more conservative elements in the military and the political spheres were apparently opposed to the presence of a large foreign military contingent on Egyptian soil and to sending a large number of Egyptians for training to the Soviet Union for fear of political and ideological indoctrination contrary to Egyptian political and religious values. In arguing against the presence of a foreign military contingent in the country, the opponents of this aspect of Soviet-Egyptian ties reminded the public of the perils the country faced during the British military presence in Egypt.⁴⁴

⁴⁴It should be noted that whereas the conservatives opposed the presence of a large Soviet contingent, the leftist students were opposed to the expansion of tourism, which would have increased the inflow of western tourists to Egypt. It seems that neither the leftist nor the rightist groups showed sufficient confidence in the inherent ability of the Egyptian to resist foreign influences incompatible with his religious and political values. This conflict between the desire to acquire modern technology and urge to reject foreign ideological and cultural values that often accompany the importation of technology has been in existence in the Middle East for many centuries going back to the time of the beginning of European technological ascendancy over the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman decision-makers, like their modern Egyptian counterparts, were eager to acquire European military technology but were vehemently opposed to accepting European political and cultural values, which they considered inferior to that of their own.

Despite this opposition and despite the early surfacing of a conflict between the Russian instructors and the Egyptian officers, there were 15,000 Soviet personnel in Egypt at the apex of the Soviet-Egyptian military cooperation that began to regress after the Soviets failed to supply to the Egyptian military the weapon systems which the Egyptian high-command considered essential for the country's armed forces. Although the training issue was not a major consideration in Sadat's expulsion decision of July 1972, the civilian and military leaders who supported Sadat's decision included those who had been opposed to Soviet presence in Egypt. General Mohammed Ahmad Sadeq, General Saaduddin Shazli, and Air Force Commander Ali Baghdadi were reported to be among those who opposed closer collaboration with the Soviet Union. In this opposition, they were supported by Vice President Husein Shafi; Sayyed Mirei, secretary general of ASU; and former Revolutionary command council members Zakaria Mohieddin, Abdul Latif Baghdadi, and Kamaluddin Hussein, all of whom called for abrogation of the Soviet-Egyptian treaty and the expulsion of Soviet experts from the country⁴⁵ It was this same coalition of civilian and military leaders that played a leading role in the liquidation of the pro-Soviet wing represented by Ali Sabri, Sami Sharaf and Sharawi Jomaa. Neither the expulsion of the Soviet advisers and technicians nor the liquidation of the pro-Soviet wing in Egypt, however, reduced the degree of Egyptian dependence on the Soviet Union for military equipment. The military imperatives once again constrained Sadat to curtail the growing anti-Soviet sentiments by firing General Sadeq who had become a focus for opposition to the Soviet presence.⁴⁶

Since the October 1973 Arab-Israel war and the subsequent U.S. involvement in the peace-making efforts, pro-Soviet sentiments have suffered new setbacks in Egypt. Prominent among the factors that seem to have adversely affected the Soviet-Egyptian ties are:

⁴⁵*An Nahar* vol. 3, no. 19 (8 May 1972) p. 2.

⁴⁶General Sadeq was fired on October 26, 1972, a day after Premier Sidki reported to a joint session of the Central Committee and the parliamentary group of ASU about the results of his recent conferences with the Soviet leaders in Moscow. He was reported to have told the joint session that the Soviet Union had promised further military aid provided the "rightist" elements in the country were eliminated from key positions. *An Nahar* vol. 3, no. 44 (30 October 1974) p. 2.

- Sadat's allegation that the Soviet ambassador in Cairo deliberately tried to split the united Egyptian-Syrian military front during the October War by misinforming him that Syria had asked for immediate ceasefire six hours after the beginning of hostilities.

- The Soviet refusal to replace all Egyptian materiel losses suffered during the October War, especially the 120 planes reportedly lost by Egypt.

- The Soviet-U.S. "understanding" on Jewish emigration from Russia to Israel.

A survey of the Egyptian and Arab press of the post-October War period indicates that these were the most salient points of Egyptian criticism of their Soviet ally. While one segment of this civil-military leadership has been critical of Soviet policies, another equally influential leadership group has expressed a keen sense of awareness of Egyptian dependence on Soviet good will for both military and industrial equipment. For military and economic expediencies alone, the latter group, which includes a significant number of Egyptian technocrats, is unwilling to weaken the Soviet-Egyptian ties. If Sadat has been artfully equivocal toward the Soviet Union, a number of influential Egyptians, including the former critics of the Soviet Union such as Mohammad H. Heikal and General Sadudin Shazli, have publicly warned the Egyptian government against the danger which might ensue if the Egyptian-Soviet ties were allowed to deteriorate.⁴⁷

Status

This issue area covers such intangible factors as the Egyptian perception of the country's role in the Middle East, what constitutes national prestige, and Egypt's relations with the super and other powers. The latter subject--relations with the super and other powers--is more fully discussed under the external environment section. Here we may briefly recapitulate what has already been stated above. For historical, religious, political, and ideological reasons, the Egyptians are divided on the question of the country's ties with the European and the two super powers. In their opposition

⁴⁷For Heikal's views on the issue, see his editorials in *Al Ahram* immediately prior to his dismissal on 1 February 1974. General Shazli was reported to have told a Lebanese newspaper that the Soviet Union "was absolutely indispensable to the Arabs, and [that] it would be a mistake to imagine that the United States was a viable alternative." *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 37 (16 September 1974), p. 2.

or support, each group offers cogent and convincing arguments which show that for most of these seemingly opposing groups the real issue of disagreement is not so much the goals to be achieved but the means to be used for achieving the national goals.

As far as the issue of Egypt's role in the Middle East is concerned, there appear to be two major schools of thought in the country. One group actively seeks Arab cooperation under Egyptian aegis and the other shows signs of isolationism and is resentful of the human and material losses sustained by Egypt for the Arab cause. Although the isolationist trend appears to be growing, the pan-Arabists continue to be in the ascendancy. The pan-Arabists, however, are not unanimous on the kind of Arab unity that ought to be sought: some Egyptians support the Qaddafiite approach that calls for an immediate federal union of "revolutionary" Arab states. This group, which has attracted a number of former members of the Muslim Brotherhood, tends to take a chauvinistic approach to almost all "Arab" causes from the Arab Persian Gulf in the east to Spanish Sahara in the west. This group, whose spokesmen and leaders in Egypt cannot be easily identified because the Cairo-Tripoli rift has caused them to keep a low public profile for fear of being accused of subversion. Another pan-Arab group seeks Arab unity through a series of anti-monarchist revolutions that would usher in an era of Arab socialist states dedicated to a set of common economic, political, and social goals that would bind them in a common struggle against the "imperialist and reactionary" forces. This group draws support from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman, and other similar leftist oriented revolutionary groups in the Arab world.

Because of Sadat's opposition to these approaches to Arab unity, the above-mentioned pan-Arab groups have not drawn popular support from the masses who currently seem to favor the pragmatic approach to Arab unity, which promises a better financial and political return, than the approaches advocated by other groups. This, however, does not mean that the pragmatists have abandoned Egypt's leadership role in the Arab world. Rather, it means that they have come to realize that the late President Nasser's method of inciting the Arab masses against their legitimate rulers proved to be counterproductive to his stated goal of Arab unity; that many of these "monarchist" rulers enjoyed a respectable degree of support based

on such tangible factors as tribal and religious loyalties which they were unable to readily abandon in favor of a less personal object such as the Arab nation; and that an approach to Arab unity from below was not a viable approach and that it must be abandoned in favor of Arab political and economic cooperation and coordination in resolving the problems of the area. Since his accession to power in 1970, Sadat has endeavored to follow a more Egyptian than pan-Arab goal; time and again in his public speeches, Sadat has reiterated his determination to make independent decisions that would be "in the interest of Egypt alone--decisions based on values only we, the people of Egypt feel."⁴⁸ While the Arab agreements, alliances, and understandings forged before, during, and after the October War might have deprived him of the option of seeking purely Egyptian solutions to the country's domestic and international problems, Sadat, who is by no means an isolationist, would prefer to expend his nation's energies and resources in strengthening the economy rather than in encouraging the overthrow of the regimes deemed unfriendly toward Egypt. In intra-regional politics, Sadat sees Egypt's role as a judicious mediator and conciliator rather than an imperial arbiter, as seemed to be the case under Nasser.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Although these remarks were made in the context of Egypt's relations with the superpower and did not deal directly with the country's relations with the Arab states, there are ample indications that before the October War Sadat wanted to turn inward and away from pan-Arab issues, such as Palestine, to concentrate his efforts on solving Egypt's social and economic problems. The above quotation is from President Sadat's speech to a conference of the Egyptian students' Federation, Alexandria, April 3, 1974, FBIS (April 4, 1974) pp. D8, D9. Malcolm Kerr maintains that the "politically conservative Egyptian Muslim, much more than his counterpart in the Fertile Crescent countries, does possess an isolationist streak..." "The United Arab Republic: The Domestic, Political, and Economic Background of Foreign Policy," in Paul Y. Hammond and Sidney S. Alexander (eds), *Political Dynamics in the Middle East* (New York: Elsevier, 1972) p. 223.

⁴⁹ Sadat has endeavored to reconcile the Saudi-South Yemen differences, the Iran-Iraq conflict, the Kuwait-Iraq border dispute, the civil conflict in Oman, the PLO-Husseini, and the PLO-Lebanon differences. Sadat also played a key role in the recognition of Bangladesh by Pakistan in 1974. As an example of Sadat's pre-October War approach, see James Reston's interview with the Egyptian president (*The New York Times*, December 28, 1970). In his *October Papers*, Sadat elucidated his ideas on the basis of Arab cooperation, Arab nationalism, and Egyptian nationalism. FBIS (supplement) 31 May 1974.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

For the purposes of our discussion and analysis, the Egyptian objectives and policies may be grouped into the following categories: political, military, economic, and social. This classification, however, should not be construed to mean an independent existence of these categories. The military, economic, and social objectives and policies are generally formulated to achieve a set of political goals that provide the *raison d'être* for all other objectives and policies pursued by the state. And often the success or failure of the military, economic, and social policies is a direct reflection of the success or failure of political objectives and goals. For example, in 1960 Nasser established for the country a set of economic goals to be achieved during the next two decades.⁵⁰ Although some of these goals were considered to be economically unrealistic, politically speaking, they were essential for the continuous existence of the regime, which wanted to establish its credentials as a revolutionary-socialist state. Egypt, however, failed to achieve its economic goals--not necessarily because they were economically unrealistic but because Nasser's political goals and policies at the systematic and regional levels proved to be incompatible with the country's economic needs. A successful completion of the Egyptian economic projects largely depended on a massive infusion of foreign capital and technology and sharp reduction in defense expenditure. Egypt failed to attract a sufficiently large amount of foreign capital because the country's new laws, promulgated under the socialist decrees, did not provide enough incentives and guarantees to the private foreign capitalist, and, similarly, Egypt could not reduce its defense expenditure because of its conflict with Israel and its military involvement in the Yemen civil war. Although the socialist decrees were designed to broaden the regime's popularity, they proved to be a serious impediment to achieving the country's economic goals--goals that would have in turn strengthened its political objectives and policies. In other words, it may be said that the politically essential goals may prove to be politically difficult to achieve. It was essentially true of Nasser's Egypt.

⁵⁰One of his economic goals was to double the national income in ten years and quadruple it in 20.

Objectives

In addition to such general and obvious objectives as maintaining territorial integrity, political independence, and national defense--goals which all independent states are obliged to pursue--Egypt's current policies are formulated with a view to achieving the following political objectives:

- The recovery of the Egyptian (the Sinai peninsula) and other Arab lands (the West Bank of Jordan, including the Arab section of Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights) under Israeli occupation since the June 1967 war.

- The restoration of the political and territorial rights of the Palestinian people.

- An accelerated rate of economic and industrial development.

- Modernization of political, economic and social institutions.

- The strengthening of inter-Arab ties that have recently been forged on the basis of political consensus and economic cooperation among the Arab states.

- The enhancement of Egypt's regional and extra-regional prestige and role in international affairs.

The above objectives are being pursued by means of political, military, economic and social programs.

Political Programs

Although the Egyptian political objectives have changed little since the July 1952 revolution, Egyptian policies under President Sadat have shown remarkable differences in substance and style compared to those of the late President Nasser. Unlike his charismatic predecessor, whose rhetoric and alleged intrigues often created a sense of apprehension and militancy among his Arab opponents, Sadat has adopted a pragmatic approach to resolving the major problems confronting the country. Recognizing the country's military and economic inadequacies in regaining the Egyptian and Arab lands, as early as December 1970, Sadat offered to recognize the existence of Israel as an independent and sovereign state if the Jewish state would simply return the Sinai peninsula to its rightful previous owner. Sadat was the first Arab leader of stature to have publicly indicated his willingness to recognize Israel and to resolve the conflict by peaceful means. It should be noted that at this stage Sadat linked his willingness to recognize Israel only with the recovery of the Sinai peninsula. This was his first condition toward resolving the Egyptian-Israeli dispute. In addition, Sadat offered

to enter into immediate negotiations with Israel on the question of the freedom of passage for Israeli ships going through the Strait of Tiran. This was Sadat's "step-by-step" approach to resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute. The second step in this process, Sadat indicated, would involve the settlement of the Palestinian problem, which he linked with a promise that a just solution of this issue would give Israeli ships the right to use the Suez Canal.

While offering a unique opportunity to Israel for a peaceful settlement of the dispute, Sadat took a number of steps designed to strengthen Egypt's military and diplomatic support in the Arab-Israeli dispute. In acquiring Soviet weapons and training, Egypt spent about five billion pounds. (£100=\$225.56) between 1967 and 1973. In addition, Sadat rapidly moved to mend his fences with Saudi Arabia and to strengthen his ties with Syria, Sudan, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirate, and for a brief period with Libya. Having consolidated his relations with his immediate Arab neighbors, Sadat concentrated his efforts among the African, the non-aligned, and the Muslim states of the Third World. Simultaneously, Sadat embarked on a concerted effort to convince the west European states that Egypt was ready for a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute and that it was the Israeli unwillingness to part with the conquered territory that was responsible for the continuation of the stalemate between the disputants. Perhaps the most important change in Egyptian foreign policy took place when Sadat, piqued by the Soviet refusal to equip the Egyptian military with more sophisticated weapons, asked the Russian advisers and technicians to leave the country.⁵¹ In addition to satisfying domestic anti-Soviet critics and to placating the new regional allies such as Saudi Arabia and Libya, both of whom had expressed their disapproval of the Soviet presence in Egypt, Sadat's action was deemed to be a reconciliatory step toward the

⁵¹ This was the ostensible reason given by Sadat at the time of the expulsion in July 1972. We have already discussed some other factors that might have strengthened Sadat's resolve to take the anti-Soviet steps. In Leonard Binder's view, the Soviets were expelled from Egypt because they were "too friendly with Sadat's enemies and the communist ideology is uncongenial to the ideological predilections of Sadat's propertied and religious supporters." ("Transformation in the Middle East subordinate system after 1967," *The USSR and the Middle East* edited by Michael Confino and Shimon Shamir [Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1973], p. 271.)

Nixon administration.⁵² Sadat, it seems, wanted to end the polarization of the Arab-Israeli conflict by developing better and more congenial ties with the United States, which alone, he concluded, could oblige Israel to withdraw from the Arab territories. However, he was reportedly informed that U.S. pressure against Israel would not materialize as long as Soviet military influence remained high in Egypt. The United States, through a Saudi Arabian intermediary, had reportedly informed Sadat that the Nixon administration would be prepared to undertake a new initiative in the Arab-Israeli conflict as a *quid pro quo* for a change in the Soviet-Egyptian ties.⁵³

Sadat's concessions to Israel (promise of recognition and negotiations) and to the United States (the expulsion of the Soviet technicians and advisers), however, did not bring any reciprocal concessions to Egypt whose population was becoming extremely restive under the no war-no peace situation that had existed since the U.S.-sponsored Suez Canal cease-fire went into effect in August 1970. For these political concessions and the heavy defense expenditure that was being incurred, Sadat had nothing to show except public ridicule by Israeli and Arab leaders. Even though Egypt received its share of promised financial aid from the Arab oil producing states, some of them, like Algeria and Iraq, were highly critical of Sadat's peace efforts through Washington and of his willingness to recognize Israel.⁵⁴ The U.S. showed no signs of

⁵² Numerous sources have suggested that both Libya and Saudi Arabia had been urging Sadat to expel the Soviet advisers from Egypt. See William Dullforce, "Egypt Expels Russian Advisers," *The Washington Post*, July 19, 1972 pp. A1 and A14; John K. Cooley, "Cairo Hopes Washington will Push Israeli Pullback," *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 22, 1972 pp. 1 and 5.

⁵³ President Nixon reportedly told the Saudi Arabian Defense Minister, Prince Sultan Ibn Abdel Aziz, who visited the United States between June 18 and July 1, 1972, that the United States would be willing to take a new initiative only after the Soviets had been expelled from Egypt. "Arab aides talk with Nixon called Factor in Sadat's Decision," *The New York Times*, July 24, 1972, p. 2; Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "... And an Interview with Anwar Sadat," *The Washington Post*, December 7, 1972 p. A19. The Evans and Novak article says that the White House had been demanding the expulsion of the Soviet advisers and technicians since 1970.

⁵⁴ Under the Khartoum agreement of August 1967, Egypt and Jordan were promised a subsidy of £ 135 million a year for the indefinite future. While this conference had authorized each state to seek a political solution, it had rejected direct negotiations and formal peace with and recognition of Israel.

reappraisal of its Middle East policies, apart from a series of generalized statements about the need for a new initiative to restore peace in the region. Having apparently come to a realization that the Zionist lobby in the U.S. and the Soviet-U.S. detente would not allow any significant change in U.S. Middle East policy, Sadat seemed to have concluded that only a renewal of the Arab-Israeli hostilities would constrain Washington to renew its peace-making activities in the region. In Sadat's calculation, the military action would act as a unifying factor among the Arabs who would be obliged to use their oil resources as a political weapon against the United States and other pro-Israeli states. In addition, Sadat wanted to shatter the Israeli concept of security that called for substantial territorial changes in favor of the Jewish state and assumed a divided Arab world.

In summary, it may be argued that Sadat's strategy achieved its main goals: it reactivated the U.S. role as a peace-maker in the Arab-Israeli conflict; it further isolated Israel from a number of European and African states; it achieved a substantial degree of Arab unity expressed in the form of an oil embargo and increase in oil prices; and it strengthened the argument that the security Israel sought could not be obtained and maintained by military force alone. Since the end of the hostilities and the disengagement agreement between Egypt and Israel, Sadat has endeavored to strengthen the Egyptian-U.S. ties by publicly voicing his approval of Secretary of State Kissinger's diplomatic efforts; by reestablishing diplomatic ties with Egypt; and by providing a rousing reception to President Nixon during his visit to Egypt. Recognizing that Saudi Arabia, because of its oil and monetary resources, will play a much more decisive and significant role in the regional and extra-regional affairs, Sadat has made deliberate efforts to move politically and ideologically closer to King Faisal than to President Qaddafi who has expressed public disapproval of Sadat's reliance on the U.S. for a peaceful solution of the Arab-Israeli dispute. Saudi Arabia, along with Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Republic, has provided hundreds of millions of dollars for Egypt's war shattered economy, and collectively these donors have promised even larger amounts in economic and military aid. In addition, under the terms of the 1974 Rabat Conference the Arab oil producing states promised Egypt annual aid of one billion dollars

for the indefinite future.⁵⁵

In addition to strengthening his ties with most Arab states (the single significant exception being Libya), Sadat has endeavored to improve Egypt's relations with Iran whose industrial and military power, being fed by the country's oil revenues, is rapidly expanding to give Iran a prominent role in the region. As a result of this reconciliation, the Shah of Iran has promised to invest about one billion dollars in rebuilding the Suez Canal Zone, is establishing new industries in the free zones, and is financing joint projects in Egypt. Furthermore, Iran is now more forthright in giving political and military aid to the Arabs than had previously been the case.⁵⁶ It seems that a Cairo-Riyad-Tehran axis is being forged with the encouragement of the United States government, which seeks the continuation of political stability in the oil-rich Arab Persian Gulf. Some political observers believe that during his January 1975 visit to Cairo, the

⁵⁵The 1974 Rabat conference of Arab heads of state promised an annual subsidy of one billion dollars each to Egypt and Syria, \$300 million to Jordan, \$50 million to the PLO, and \$150 million to South Yemen. Citing "reliable Arab sources" in Beirut, Jim Hoagland reported on January 14, 1975, that the Arab oil producers had decided to slash the proposed financial aid by 58 percent. No reasons for this change were given (*The Washington Post*, January 14, 1975, p. A1). There is no accurate account of the total Saudi help given to Egypt since the October 1973 War. Press estimates have ranged between \$500 million and \$2 billion. On August 3, 1974, the authoritative Egyptian daily *Al-Ahram* reported that Saudi Arabia had given Egypt a grant of \$1 billion "in appreciation of the sacrifices made by the Egyptian people in fighting for the Arab nation." This report said that the one billion dollar gift was in addition to the interest-free loan of \$500 million Riyadh had granted to Cairo. Another report said that Feisal had given a gift of \$300 million to meet the requirements of reconstruction and to improve the University of Al-Azhar. It was further reported that Saudi Arabia would finance the purchase of French fighter planes for Egypt at a cost of over \$500 million (FBIS, August 5, August 7, and August 28, 1974). Recently, Saudi Arabia signed an agreement to purchase 60 U.S.-built F-5 jet fighters, some of which might be transferred to Egypt, according to newspaper reports. Saudi sources insist that there are "no strings" attached to the U.S.-Saudi agreement (Guy Halverson, "Will F-5 sale bind Saudis, U.S. closer?" *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 14, 1975, p. 6).

⁵⁶In the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, Iran was reported to have placed at the disposal of Saudi Arabia six C-130 cargo planes for the transportation of Saudi troops to Jordan. (Jim Hoagland, "Shah visiting Jordan, Egypt," *The Washington Post*, January 7, 1975, pp. A1 and A12). As an expression of solidarity with the Arabs during the October war, the Shah agreed to a "cease-fire" with Iraq so that the Iraqi troops could support the Syrians at the Golan front.

Shah of Iran and President Sadat probably discussed, *inter alia*, the ways and means of ending Saudi-Iranian oil rivalry, which, if not checked, could seriously threaten Iran's industrial development.⁵⁷ It is plausible that the United States government is encouraging Iran to give some of its U.S.-built weapon systems to Egypt so that the Sadat regime would not be threatened by the Egyptian military for his failure to replenish the Soviet armaments lost during the October 1973 War. In addition, Iran could provide training facilities for Egyptian pilots and radar technicians in the use of U.S. materiel that Egypt might be able to acquire after substantial progress has been made in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Egyptian-Iranian and the Egyptian-Saudi rapprochement seem to have stimulated Iraqi interest in offering \$700 million in economic aid to Cairo and in signing a series of commercial and technical agreements with it.⁵⁸ Although a leader of the so-called "rejection front," the Iraqi regime has endeavored, under internal pressure, to improve its relations with its Egyptian "brothers" against whom they have often competed for the leadership of the Arab East. If Iran and Iraq decide to de-escalate their current military confrontation on the Kurdish issue, the two rivals might find in Sadat a mutually acceptable mediator to resolve their dispute.⁵⁹ Although the Rabat Conference was reported to have urged King Hussain of Jordan to try to resolve the Iraqi-Iranian conflict, Sadat too has offered his "good offices" to the two disputants. Evidently, Sadat assumes that a rapprochement between Iran and Iraq would help in creating a general atmosphere of Arab-Iranian cordiality and in improving trade relations between the Arab states and Iran, whose major regional trade partner has "traditionally" been Israel. Sadat seems to feel that a general reconciliation between Iran and the major Arab states would not only loosen

⁵⁷ Jim Hoagland, "Shah visiting Jordan, Egypt." p. A12; Harry B. Ellis, "Why Iran's Shah Turns from Israel," *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 23, 1974, p. 1, notes a rapprochement developing between Riyadh and Tehran; Joseph Fitchett, however, argues that King Faisal "is likely to be suspicious of Egyptian Iranian cooperation in the Gulf." "Egypt and Iran may shift Middle East balance," *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 23, 1974. pp. 1 and 4.

⁵⁸ *An Nahar Arab Report*, vol. 5, no. 46 (November 18, 1974).

⁵⁹ Since in this section we are focusing on the Egyptian political programs, there is no need here to discuss the ideological and other differences that have caused the Iraqi-Iranian rift. An attempt has been made to analyze this problem in Chapter Three of this report.

the Iranian-Israeli links (a highly desirable prospect for the Arabs), but also save Egypt from being singled out for political attacks by its adversaries, such as Libya, for being acquiescent to Iran's Gulf policies and its military occupation of two islands--Bani Tanb and Tanb-e bozorg--at the northern end of the Strait of Hormuz in 1971.⁶⁰ As president of the most influential Arab state Sadat has the means to effect a reconciliation between the Arabs and the Iranians, provided Iran's Kurdish policies do not undermine the territorial integrity of Iraq.

Since the creation of Israel in 1948 and the ensuing expulsion-emigration of the Arab population from the area comprising the Jewish state, Egypt has consistently supported the "inherent" right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and lands and to establish an independent political entity in Palestine. While always unequivocal in defending the rights of the Palestinians to regain their territory, Egypt's relations with the various Palestinian organizations have oscillated between cordiality and enmity. In an effort to ensure the spread of influence among the Palestinian elites and masses, Egypt has endeavored to promote amenable Palestinians to key positions in their national councils. It was with this view in mind that President Nasser reportedly urged the Palestinian leader Ahmad Assad Shuqairy to form a Palestinian national organization.

During Shuqairy's tenure as head of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Egypt's relations with the Palestinian movement were cordial and amicable; Nasser used this organization more for the enhancement of the Egyptian national interests than to promote and safeguard the national interests of the Palestinian people. The crushing defeat of the Arab armies in June 1967, the "resignation" of Shuqairy from the PLO, the emergence of more militant and nationalistic leaders within the Palestinian resistance movement, and the willingness of other Arab states to support rival Palestinian groups changed Egyptian relations with the Palestinians. While the "moderate" leaders of the resistance movement continued to maintain close ties with Egypt, neither

⁶⁰ Claiming Arab sovereignty over these islands, most Arab states denounced the Iranian action as "provocative" and "imperialistic" in nature. Accusing the United Kingdom of "collusion" with Iran, the Libyan Arab Republic retaliated by nationalizing British oil interests in the country. Iraq retaliated by breaking diplomatic ties with London and Tehran. However, British oil interests in Iraq were not nationalized until June 1972 (*Record* [July-December 1971] pp. 2932 and 3291). Although the islands issue is no longer a serious bone of contention between Iran and the Arabs, the Iranian military build-up and its military actions in Dhofar have come under heavy criticism by the Arab media.

Nasser nor his successor, Sadat, could any longer take for granted an automatic approval by the Palestinians of Egyptian policies affecting their national aspirations and goals. Similarly, Palestinian leaders and organizations who refused to work within an Egyptian approved framework of activities were immediately deprived of Egyptian financial and political support. For example, Dr. George Habash, while leading the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), was closely affiliated with Nasser who provided this Palestinian leader with shelter and with financial and political support as long as Habash did not adopt political and ideological stances unaccentable to Egypt. The Nasser-Habash ties broke after the June 1967 War when Habash became an exponent of the Marxist-Leninist approach to the political and social problems of the Arab world. The Habash-Nasser break was so complete that the Egyptian radio, television, and the semi-official *al-Ahram* made no mention of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) even at the height of its popularity in 1970 when this organization hijacked a number of airplanes. The Egyptian radio and television, and *al-Ahram* identified the hijackers merely as "members of the Palestinian resistance movement." This ostracism of Habash and the PFLP, however, was not as complete as it might sound. Egyptian newspapers of lesser standing than *al-Ahram* did occasionally make references to Nasser's erstwhile ally.

The vacuum left by the Habash-Nasser break was immediately filled by a new group of young and dynamic Palestinian leaders who had earlier in 1965 founded the Palestine National Liberation Movement (al-Fatah). This young organization was in immediate need of an influential and resourceful sponsor who would be willing to provide military training to its cadres. Egypt, which had experienced another humiliating military defeat and had lost credibility with some elements of the resistance movement, was in need of a friendly commando organization to regain some of the influence lost during and after the June war. In August 1967, after assuring himself of Fatah's ideology and principles through his foreign minister, Mahmoud Riad, and Mohamed Heikal of *al-Ahram*, Nasser met with two Fatah leaders and offered them large-scale aid in arms, training, and supplies.⁶²

⁶¹ *An Nahar*, vol. no. 27 (7 September 1970) p. 2.

⁶² Salah Khalaf (alias Abu Iyad) and Faruq Qaddumi (alias Abu Lutf) met with Riad, Heikal and later with Nasser in August 1967. (Riad N. El Rayyes and Dunia Nahas [eds.] *Guerrillas for Palestine*, Beirut: An Nahar Arab Report Books 4, 1974 p. 97.)

During the next three years, President Nasser gave every indication that Fatah was nearly the only Palestinian organization which inspired Cairo's confidence and deserved its full support. Nasser was unusually generous in his statements on Fatah and let it be known that he wished to identify his regime with it. Nasser helped in building up Yassir Arafat's image by introducing him to foreign leaders, including the leaders of the Kremlin. Although it had been engaged in anti-Israel activities since January 1965, Fatah became "the acknowledged voice" of the Palestinian resistance after the battle of Karamah in March 1968.⁶³ In the same year, Fatah joined the Palestine Liberation Organization; Arafat was elected its chairman, a position he has held since then. Thus, Nasser succeeded in enhancing Egypt's influence in the resistance organization, which in 1969 brought all commando groups within its fold.

Although Egypt's ties with Fatah and the Fatah-dominated PLO apparently remained strong, a number of influential Palestinian leaders began to manifest discontentment with the relationship. Some of these leaders opposed close cooperation with Egypt on ideological grounds, and others objected to it on purely nationalistic grounds. This opposition became more vocal and significant in July 1970 when President Nasser accepted the Rogers Peace Plan and accepted a cease-fire along the Suez Canal. Kamal Adwan, a member of Fatah's central committee in charge of information, ordered Fatah's Cairo-based Assifa Radio to denounce Egypt for its approach to the Middle East conflict.⁶⁴ Assifa radio's denunciatory broadcast caused the Egyptian government to suspend the Fatah and the PLO broadcasting

⁶³Michael C. Hudson, "Developments and Setbacks in the Palestinian Resistance Movement 1967-1971," *Journal of Palestine Studies* vol. 1 no. 3 (Spring 1972), pp. 64-84. This one-day battle was fought on March 21 in the town of Karamah on the eastern bank of the Jordan. Israeli armored columns supported by the Israeli Air Force attacked the town believed to be a training center for the guerrillas. Although lacking sophisticated weapons, the Palestinian commandos in coordination with the Jordanian forces reportedly inflicted heavy casualties on the invading Israeli military force which, according to a statement by King Hussain, lost 4 jets, 35 armored vehicles, and suffered 200 casualties, including 73 dead. *The Middle East Journal* vol. 22 no. 3 [Summer 1968], chronology, pp. 325 and 33.

⁶⁴According to a report in *An Nahar* vol 1, no. 27 (7 September, 1970), p. 2, Adwan had taken this action independently, without consulting the central committee, which, he believed, would have opposed his move. Kamal Adwan was a Palestinian nationalist who opposed a close identification between Fatah-PLO and Egypt. In April 1973, he was brutally assassinated

continued

facilities in Cairo. The Egyptian authorities also closed down the Palestinian offices in the country and expelled from it 15 Palestinian guerrillas belonging to Fatah and PFLP.⁶⁵ With the exception of two minor Palestinian organizations--the Action Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (AOLP) and the Palestine Arab Organization (PAO)--almost all other Palestinian groups roundly condemned Egypt and Jordan for accepting the Rogers Peace Plan.⁶⁶

Although the Palestinian-Jordanian confrontation in September 1970 and again in March 1971 helped to bring the resistance and Cairo closer to each other, the Palestinian-Egyptian detente once again foundered in November when four Black Septemberists assassinated Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi Tal in Cairo. Following this incident, the Egyptian security apparatus began to crack down on the Palestinian students and guerrillas in the country. The Egyptian retaliation was not to avenge the Jordanian premier's death, for whom Sadat had little respect because of Tal's role in Jordanian-Palestinian relations, but to ensure firm government control over the activities of anti-government "centers of power," which, availing themselves of pro-Palestinian public sentiment, began to organize students committees that became the nucleus of anti-government riots in January 1972. It was

con't in a raid on his apartment in Beirut by an Israeli terrorist squad. Other prominent members of the Central Committee opposing close identification with Egypt were: the Hassan brothers, Hani and Khaled. They are among the founders of Fatah and maintain close relations with Saudi Arabia. In the power struggle between the Nasserites and Feisalites, the influence of the Hassan brothers was temporarily eclipsed; Khaled Hassan, who had been considered as Feisal's choice to succeed Arafat, was ousted from the PLO Executive Committee in January 1973. Recently Khaled Hassan has been appointed the PLO representative to the Egyptian-Palestinian Coordination Committee whose Egyptian representative is Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmi (FBIS, March 28, 1974). Hani Hassan, alias Abu al-Hassan, continued to remain in the limelight and played an important role in the organization as a member of the 5-man Action committee of the PLO. The pro-Egyptian faction was led by the triumvirate of Yasser Arafat, Salah Khalf, and Faruq Qaddumi.

⁶⁵Text of the official announcement of the closing down of the Fatah and the PLO broadcasting facilities may be found in FBIS (28 July 1970) p. G 1. The report of the expulsions was published by the Kuwaiti daily *AL-Rai al-aam*, and distributed by AFP on August 4, 1970, FBIS (4 August 1970) p. G. 1.

⁶⁶Palestinian broadcasting stations in Algeria, Syria, Iraq, and Sudan were unanimous in their denunciation of Egypt and Jordan for their acceptance of the Rogers Plan, see FBIS from July 24, 1970 to the end of March 1971. On March 29, Sadat rescinded the suspension order during the second Jordanian-Palestinian crisis which he was endeavoring to resolve.

surmised that the assassination took place with the connivance of the Egyptian security apparatus with a view to embarrass Sadat whose control over the security police had not yet consolidated following the removal of the former security chief Sharawi Jomma.⁶⁷ For Sadat, the incident became a challenge to his authority and he used both diplomacy and force to suppress this challenge. The Egyptian police arrested a number of Palestinian students and accused the resistance of inciting anti-government demonstrations. In an effort to put pressure on the resistance leadership, to let them know that Egypt might sponsor an alternative leadership group among the Palestinians, the Egyptian government began to encourage the former PLO chief Ahmad Shuqairy to come out of retirement and to take a more active role in Palestinian affairs. After consulting with a number of Palestinian leaders, Ahmad Shuqairy called for a "rectification" of the resistance movement within the framework of the PLO.⁶⁸

If the Egyptian government could encourage the long-discredited Shuqairy as a means of putting pressure on the Palestinians, they in turn could count on their rich and influential allies to induce Sadat to moderate his attitude and policies toward the resistance. While Sadat could not allow the alleged assassins to escape without trial, neither could he afford to treat them as common criminals. Libyan pressure in behalf of the resistance constrained Sadat to declare that the assassination of Wasfi Tal was a political act and that its perpetrators would be tried by the state security court rather than by the criminal court.⁶⁹ Although these actions and the presence of the pro-Egyptian leaders in the Central Committee of the PLO helped to lower tension between the two parties, Egyptian-Palestinian relations remained tense until April 1972 when, as a reaction to King Hussein's United Kingdom plan, Sadat

⁶⁷ *An Nahar*, vol. 2, no. 46 (6 December 1971), p. 2. It should be noted that after the assassination, the Black Septemberists declared that a similar fate awaited those Arab leaders who sought a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian problem. Since Sadat was still engaged in a dialogue with the U.S., he could not afford inaction against certain elements of the Palestinians in Egypt.

⁶⁸ Rayyes and Nahas, *Guerrillas for Palestine*, p. 100.

⁶⁹ *An Nahar* (6 December 1971), p. 2. On February 29, 1972, the four alleged assassins were released on a bail set at ~~£~~\$ 1,000 each. At the time of this release, the state prosecutor said that ballistic tests did not show that the bullet which killed Wasfi Tal came from any of the revolvers carried by the four accused.

severed diplomatic ties with Amman. Concurrently, Sadat, while addressing the Palestine National Congress being held in Cairo, reaffirmed Egypt's position that the Palestinian organization was the only legitimate representative body of the Palestinian people and reiterated his determination to recover Arab territory by means of force, if necessary. Denouncing the Hussein plan for a united kingdom of the West Bank and the Transjordan, Sadat said that it was an American plan designed to undermine the Palestine question.⁷⁰ These actions and statements were highly appreciated by the PLO and were responsible for effecting a rapprochement between Cairo and the resistance.

These statements and diplomatic moves were, however, not directed merely toward the PLO. They were parts of a much larger political and military action program which was being formulated by Sadat during this time. Having become disillusioned with the U.S. peace initiatives, Sadat was constrained to prepare for a military action against the Israeli forces in Sinai. For this purpose, he needed to strengthen his ties with Syria, Libya, and Algeria, among others. Because of the Palestinian-Jordanian conflict, neither of these countries maintained cordial relations with Amman. Since Sadat was depending on Qaddafi for financial aid and for military equipment, it was imperative for Sadat to show bellicosity toward Jordan. For Sadat, confronted by internal problems and preparing for a military conflict with Israel, it was much more beneficial to cultivate better relations with the PLO and its Libyan patron, Muammar Qaddafi, than to maintain diplomatic ties with Hussein who had foreclosed the possibility of participation in a future military conflict with Israel.⁷¹

Egyptian-resistance relations became tense during sessions of the Arab League Defense Council which met in Cairo in January 1973. During this conference, efforts were made to reconcile the Cairo-Amman differences prior to King Hussein's visit to the United States. At the urging of King Feisal,

⁷⁰ Egypt broke diplomatic ties with Amman on April 6, 1972. Soon after announcing his united kingdom plan on March 15, 1972, King Hussein met with President Nixon in Washington, D.C. and acquainted him with the plan. While Sadat was telling the Arabs that he would use force to recover Arab territory, King Hussein was telling his American audience that he would not enter into another war with Israel because a repetition of the 1967 disaster would "mean the destruction of the Arab world." *An Nahar*, vol 3, no. 17 (24 April 1972). n.p.

⁷¹ After several months of talks between Cairo and Amman in which Riyadh played a decisive role, diplomatic ties between Egypt and Jordan were restored on September 12, 1973, less than a month before the Fourth Arab-Israeli war. *An Nahar*, vol. 4, no. 39 (24 September 1973), n.p.

secret contacts were reported to have been made between Cairo and Amman before their representatives met each other during sessions of the Arab League Defense Council. The resistance reiterated its objections to improving Arab relations with Hussein and seeking a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Relations between resistance and Cairo further deteriorated when Egyptian Foreign Minister Zayyat proposed the creation of a Palestinian state. The resistance believed that Egypt sought to create a Palestinian entity which would be willing to negotiate peace with Israel. Although Cairo rejected this interpretation of its proposal, many Palestinian leaders remained suspicious of Egyptian motives.

After the October 1973 War, Egyptian-Palestinian relations plummeted to a new low when, in a joint Egyptian-Jordanian communique issued on July 18, 1974, Egypt recognized Hussein's right to speak for the Palestinians domiciled in the Transjordan. Simultaneously, Cairo endeavored to reassure the Palestinians of Egyptian support regarding all the territory claimed by the PLO and occupied by Israel, including the West Bank and the Gaza strip. The Palestinians were furious; they accused the Egyptian government of violation of the Algiers declaration which had recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.⁷² Denouncing the Sadat-Hussein "collusion" against the Palestinians, they demanded an official abrogation of the relevant statement in the communique, a step Cairo could hardly take because of its political and diplomatic implications. It was during this time, while King Feisal was trying to mollify Yasser Arafat with the promise that the Saudi monarch would prevail upon King Hussein to change his mind regarding the West Bank if the resistance leader were a little more conciliatory toward the Jordanian monarch, that the Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmi created tension by a statement that favored Jordan as a temporary representative of the Palestinians, after Israel pulled out of the West Bank. This statement, which obviously went beyond the Egyptian-Jordanian communique, was interpreted by the resistance as the hardening of the Egyptian position toward the Palestinians. Commenting on the Egyptian-Jordanian communique, Farouk Qaddumi, who has the title of foreign minister of the PLO, said that a conference of leaders of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the PLO was now out of the question. It should be recalled that Sadat had sought to convene such a conference before the proposed Geneva Conference could be attended by the Arabs.

⁷²A three-day Arab summit was held in Algiers on November 26-28, 1973.

In making this joint statement with Jordan, Sadat had taken a calculated risk in the hope that the United States would more easily be able to convince Israel to return the West Bank if Hussein and not the resistance movement were to negotiate with Israel. Fahmi's statement was designed to satisfy the Israeli objection to the prospect of immediate Palestinian control over the West Bank, after the Israeli withdrawal. The Palestinians believed that the Egyptians had been deceived by the Israelis whose tactics of negotiations succeeded once again in dividing the Arab world on the issue of Palestine. The Palestinian reaction aside, it was evident that the Egyptian-Jordanian communique and the Fahmi statement were received with approval by the U.S. government, which, for the first time on this occasion, expressed itself in favor of a disengagement between Jordan and Israel.⁷³ The Palestinians asserted that the Egyptian-Jordanian and the U.S.-Jordanian communiques were diplomatic signals that showed the signatories' efforts to reestablish Jordanian control over the West Bank.

The Palestinian-Egyptian rift caused the PLO to fight the Egyptian-Jordanian accord with a diplomatic campaign in the Arab world. After discussing the issue at an extraordinary session of the PLO Executive Committee, Yasser Arafat sought support of King Feisal who reportedly assured him that Saudi Arabia would oppose a Jordanian-Israeli disengagement if it prejudiced the rights of the Palestinian people and that of the PLO. There were no reports of Feisal's reaction to the Egyptian-Jordanian communique, which had given the PLO serious cause for apprehension. If there were no public pronouncements from Feisal to smoothe Palestinian susceptibilities, there were indications that the failure of Israel to negotiate a withdrawal with Jordan was constraining the Arab leaders to recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians, wherever they may be living. This recognition was accorded to them by the Arab heads of state meeting in Rabat in October 1974. Thus, Sadat was able to come out of this situation without serious damage to his ties with King Hussein or with the resistance. He let the Arab consensus bury the Egyptian-Jordanian communique that had sought to divide the legitimacy of authority over the Palestinians between Hussein and the PLO.

⁷³See the text of U.S.-Jordanian communique issued in Washington, August 18, 1974.

Currently, Sadat in coordination with King Feisal and President Assad, is endeavoring to find a compromise formula that would assign an acceptable role both to Jordan and the PLO in the proposed Geneva Peace Conference between the Arabs and Israel. In this connection, a quadripartite conference between Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the PLO, held in Cairo in January 1975, tried to resolve the differences between Jordan and the PLO. Reports emanating from the PLO participants of the conference indicate that the Egyptian delegation had suggested that the resistance should designate Jordan to carry out disengagement negotiations on behalf of the PLO. This Egyptian attitude, these sources contend, is directly connected with Cairo's continuous reliance on the American peace approach, which does not assign to the PLO any role in the negotiation process. The PLO believes that Egypt is unwilling to exercise any pressure on Jordan and that Cairo is more interested in creating conditions conducive to Secretary of State Kissinger's peace efforts (that would cover Jordan as well as Egypt) than in coordinating efforts with the PLO, as envisaged by the Rabat communique.⁷⁴

It is assumed that during the January 1975 visits to Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, King Feisal endeavored to bridge the differences between the PLO and Egypt; between the resistance and King Hussein; and between Syria and Egypt. Whether or not the PLO will agree to some of the Egyptian and Jordanian conditions reportedly put forth during the last quadripartite conference largely depends on the degree of Feisal's willingness and ability to put enough pressure on the resistance movement. At Rabat, it was primarily due to Feisal's complete support for the PLO that it received unanimous acknowledgement for its claim to be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It is plausible that this unequivocal Saudi support has inspired a greater degree of confidence between Riyadh and the PLO and that because of this, the resistance movement might be amenable to "sound advice" from the Saudi monarch who seems to be determined to maintain Arab unity on the question of Palestine. Therefore, it is assumed that Feisal urged Arab unity and coordination in return for the massive economic aid he is capable of offering to Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and the PLO. Apparently convinced of the sincerity of U.S. intentions to resolve the Middle East conflict, Feisal is willing to help create conditions conducive to the U.S. peace approach. But how far can Feisal go without jeopardising his own leadership and popularity gained since the oil embargo? Of course

⁷⁴ *An Nahar*, vol. 6., no. 2 (13 January 1975), p. 3.

it is not just Feisal's leadership and popularity that are at stake--Hussein, Sadat, Assad, and Arafat, all have been identified with U.S. peace efforts. If these efforts prove to be unproductive and below expectations, the leadership of each one of them will be seriously threatened by groups and forces waiting for such an occasion.

Before Egypt entered the final phases of preparation for a military crossing of the Suez Canal, Cairo endeavored to mend its fences with most of its Arab adversaries, and it tried to enlist moral and political support for the Arab cause from several international organizations, including the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Security Council of the United Nations, and the Organization of the Non-aligned Nations.⁷⁵ These were laudable and significant achievements on the part of Sadat and other Arab leaders.

Closer to the home front, however, Sadat was unable to resolve his differences with President Muammar Qaddafi whose oil-rich state was scheduled to merge in a federation with Egypt and Syria before September 1, 1973. The agreement for the federation of the three Arab states had been reached in 1972 but already in the beginning of 1973 serious problems had appeared regarding the questions of war and peace, the role of religion, the type of constitution to be adopted for the proposed federation, and the federation's ties with the Arab states. It seems that prior to signing the federation agreement, Sadat had failed to discuss and iron out the major differences between himself and Qaddafi who took his pan-Arab and Islamic brotherhood ideals much more seriously than most of his contemporary Arab rulers. Qaddafi believed that an Egyptian-Libyan union was imperative and inevitable, even at the cost of "civil war," and that this merger would be the best means to prepare for war against Israel. Since Qaddafi believed in the "inevitability" of the union, he saw no reason to delay any further the achievement of this "noble" goal. Sadat, on the other hand, while accepting the necessity of unity, believed that it should be achieved in stages. In addition, the two

⁷⁵Sadat attended the Addis Ababa meeting of the OAU held in May 1973. A resolution by the OAU asked its members to sever diplomatic and trade ties with Israel; most members of this organization had broken diplomatic ties by the end of the year. In July, a Security Council resolution favorable to the Arabs and supported by 14 permanent and non-permanent members was vetoed by the U.S. It was considered a moral victory for the Arabs who were able to isolate the U.S. and Israel in the World Council. The non-aligned nations meeting in Algiers passed for the first time a strongly worded pro-Arab resolution that provided a further boost to Arab morale.

leaders differ in their approaches to the Arab Israeli conflict, and the role of Islam in domestic and international affairs. On the question of the Arab-Israeli conflict, President Qaddafi is firmly against recognizing Israel, and he is convinced that only through the use of force could the Palestinians and the Arabs regain their political and territorial rights. On the question of the role of Islam in domestic and international affairs, President Qaddafi argues that the Muslims must organize their affairs according to the *Sharia* (Muslim law) and that the Muslim states should cooperate and coordinate their efforts in all spheres of international activities. These ideas of Qaddafi have not been totally acceptable to Sadat whose domestic situation and international responsibilities radically differ from that of his Libyan counterpart. Domestically, Sadat could not accept Qaddafi's suggestion about the *Sharia* without alienating the portion of Egyptian population that is Coptic Christian. This minority was, of course, not the only consideration for Sadat's opposition. A large number of the People's Assembly and the ASU members, along with writers, intellectuals, and officials, were opposed to Qaddafi's rigid interpretation of Islam.⁷⁶ Similarly, Sadat feared a complete identity of views with Qaddafi on international problems would destroy Egyptian chances of recovering Arab territory. While recognizing the necessity of strengthening Egyptian armed forces, partly through financial aid from Libya, Sadat was reluctant to close the door on peaceful negotiations through the good offices of the United States--a method urged by King Feisal who could cover any financial deficit incurred by Egypt, should Libya stop its aid due to political disagreements.

Despite Sadat's opposition and the apparent indisposition of many other Egyptians to Qaddafi's policies, there were many pro-Libyan groups within the Egyptian political system. Of these, the most prominent was Mohammed H. Heikal who, although by no means a Muslim fundamentalist of the Qaddafi variety, supported Qaddafi's ideas on the union. In his influential weekly column, "Frankly Speaking," Heikal criticized Sadat for his lack of enthusiasm toward the union with Libya. The appearance of Heikal's criticism

⁷⁶In July 1973, Qaddafi reportedly held a series of discussion sessions with the members of the People's Assembly and the ASU. *An Nahar*, vol. 4, no. 28 (9 July 1973), p. 3.

coincided with the Libyan unionist march on Egypt in July 1973, and with the rumours that an anti-Sadat coup was imminent. Other groups which reportedly supported Qaddafi were the pro-Sadeq military officers, religiously oriented students, and the remnant of the Muslim Brotherhood.⁷⁷

Qaddafi's contacts with these groups have been a source of concern and apprehension with Sadat who has more than once been a target of assassination. One such attempt was reported to have been made on April 19, 1974, a day after the attack on the military academy where 11 persons were killed and 27 wounded by a squad of the "Mohammed's Youth" allegedly headed by Dr. Saleh Abdullah Sariyah, a Palestinian with an Iraqi passport and working for the Arab League in Cairo. The Egyptian government accused Qaddafi of contact with the Libyan leader. In August 1974, President Sadat accused Libya of being involved in an attempt to blow up his house at Mersa Matruh, and to kill Ihsan Abdul Quddus, a pro-Sadat editor. In spite of these and other alleged provocations by Libya, Sadat has been unable to either ignore Qaddafi or put an effective end to their rift.⁷⁸ Sadat has been unable to ignore Qaddafi primarily because the Libyan leader does command considerable respect among the Arab and the Muslim youth; some are attracted to him because they consider him as the true successor of Nasser, dynamic, defiant of the West as well as of the East, self-assured, and highly proud of his Arab-Islamic heritage; others admire him for his pan-Islamic approach, which has extended Libyan financial support to such far away places as the Philippines and Pakistan and places closer to home, such as Chad, Turkey, Uganda, and others; still others respect him for his revolutionary fervor that supports the Irish Republican Army against the British, the Palestinian guerrillas against Israel, and liberation movements in the Spanish Sahara and in Ethiopia; and others like his condemnation of "reactionary" monarchical regimes in Saudi

⁷⁷ Sadeq, Egyptian Minister of War and commander-in-chief of the Egyptian, Libyan, and Syrian joint forces, was dismissed by Sadat on October 26, 1972. Qaddafi shared Sadeq's views concerning the futility of collaboration with the Soviet Union. Qaddafi was reported to have been angry at Sadat's decision because neither Libya nor Syria were consulted about Sadeq's removal.

⁷⁸ Libya and Egypt traded a long and comprehensive list of accusations and charges pertaining to the supply of materiel, military coordination, the use of airport and seaport facilities, and similar other matters during the October 1973 War. Radio Cairo, Radio Tripoli, and the Egyptian and Libyan press media carried official versions of these charges. See FBIS, June-August 1973.

Arabia, Morocco, and Jordan.⁷⁹ Sadat's strategy was to depolarize the Arab-Israeli conflict and to neutralize the U.S. role in it. It was imperative for him to maintain close relations with Saudi Arabia because as one of the largest oil producers in the world it could play a significant role in influencing Washington's Middle East policies. Before the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the American assumption was that the Gulf oil-producing Arab states would not, and perhaps could not, use oil as a political weapon in influencing the Middle East policies of the oil-importing states of Europe, Japan, and the United States. U.S. officials made deliberate efforts to maintain this posture; during press conferences and speeches, they reiterated their conviction that the Arab-Israeli conflict was unrelated to the problems of oil nationalization and oil prices. If Sadat were to disprove this assumption, he would have to have the close cooperation of King Feisal without whose participation and blessings no Arab oil embargo or oil price increase could be expected to succeed.⁸⁰ Libya could provide Egypt with financial aid and with some military equipment obtainable from Europe, but Tripoli could not match Saudi Arabia in its oil resources which give Riyadh considerably more political influence in regional and extra-regional affairs. Therefore

⁷⁹Embassy of Pakistan, Washington, D.C. *Pakistan Affairs*, vol. 28, no. 2 (January 16, 1975), p. 1. In response to an appeal for aid by the Pakistan government, the Arab oil-producing states contributed \$40,000,000 toward the rehabilitation of the victims of an earthquake which had struck northern Pakistan in January 1975. Of this sum, \$16,000,000 came from Libya, followed by \$10,000,000 from Saudi Arabia, \$8,000,000 from the United Arab Emirate, and \$5,000,000 from Kuwait. During the 1971 India-Pakistan war, Libya provided indispensable military materiel to Pakistan. Similarly, during the Cyprus crisis in July-August 1974, Libya was reported to have provided substantial financial aid and oil to Turkey.

⁸⁰On a number of occasions, Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, and the Secretary of State William Rogers enunciated this assumption in their public statements and press interviews. This assumption was not based on historical evidence. In the past, Arab states had used oil as a political weapon against the West on three occasions. During the 1956 war, oil supplies were interrupted and pipelines in Syria were blown up; during the 1967 war, several Arab oil producers imposed a temporary embargo on shipments to the U.S., Britain, and West Germany; and in 1971, Libya nationalized the British oil interests in retaliation for its refusal to prevent Iran from occupying two islands in the Persian Gulf. For a Saudi reaction to Libyan-Egyptian relations, see John K. Cooley, "Saudi Arabia Reviews Ties with U.S.," *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 10, 1973, pp. 1 and 3. It must, however, be conceded that Saudi pronouncements, in 1972 and earlier, that oil would not be used

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for Sadat the choice was clear. He could not afford to alienate Saudi Arabia by moving Egypt closer to Qaddafi's Libya.

Notwithstanding Qaddafi's puritanical approach to Islam, he continues to project an image of being a "revolutionary" among the Arab rulers. For this reason alone, if nothing else, Sadat has been hesitant to make a complete break with Qaddafi. Considering that he is having problems with the Palestinians and that his ties with Assad are beginning to show strains of "mistrust," Sadat finds it prudent to maintain a dialogue with the neighboring "revolutionary" regime so that he will not be solely identified with the conservative Arab governments. In this connection Sadat has accepted the mediation efforts of Yasser Arafat and President Jaafar Numeiry who in recent months have made efforts to bridge the differences between Cairo and Tripoli.

Military Programs

In view of the highly sensitive nature of this subject and the non-availability of hard data, the military goals listed below had to be stated in broad general terms. Thus, the discussion which follows the list is premised on the assumption that the Arab-Israeli conflict will continue to be the major source of concern for the Egyptian government for several more years. This discussion is primarily based on a number of articles that have appeared since the end of the October War and on several studies which compared and analyzed the strength and weaknesses of the Israeli and the Arab (primarily of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan) armies before the October War.⁸¹

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as a political weapon had strengthened the American assumption. It was in April 1973 that the Saudi Petroleum Minister Zaki el-Yamani linked the possibility of raising Saudi oil production to meet the growing U.S. energy needs with Washington's ability to change its pro-Israeli posture. See *The New York Times*, April 19, 1973 p. 1. In August, King Feisal, in an interview with NBC, reiterated his petroleum minister's conditions for increasing the Saudi oil production to 20 million barrels a day by 1985.

⁸¹ For example, see Colin S. Gray, "The Security of Israel," *Military Review*, vol. LIII, no. 10 (October 1973), pp. 22-36; Ronald M. Devore, "The Arab Israeli Military Balance," *Revue Militaire Generale* (March 1973) reproduced in *Military Review*, vol. LIII, no. 11 (November 1973), pp. 65-71; Melvin J. Stanford, "Strategic Factors within the Middle East," *Military Review*, vol. LIII, no. 12 (December 1973), pp. 78-91; "Middle East War," *Military Review*, vol. LIV no. 2 (February 1974), pp. 48-49; Kenneth S. Brower, "The Yom Kippur War," *Military Review*, vol. LIV, no. 3 (March 1974), pp. 25-33;

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The goals are:

- To raise the strength and standard of efficiency of the armed forces so that they will become an effective deterrent against foreign enemies,
- To assure by acceptable political means the availability of modern sophisticated weapon systems for all branches of the armed forces,
- To establish and expand defense-related industries within the country; and
- To strengthen military cooperation and coordination with the neighboring Arab states.

Military Policies

During the last 25 years, Egyptian military efforts have been directed toward maintaining a semblance of "balance of power" between itself and Israel. It was the Israeli military pressure in the Sinai and the realization of the enemy's military superiority that forced Nasser to break the Western imposed arms embargo and to seek Russian weapons comparable to those available to Israel.⁸² For this purpose, Egypt has been spending a substantial portion of its annual budget on the defense establishment, which has increased from 80,000 in 1955-56⁸³ to Et 323,000 in 1974-75.⁸⁴ Initially, the Egyptians believed that they could achieve military

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Roger L. Crump, "The October War: A Postwar Assessment." *Military Review*, vol. LIV, no. 8 (August 1974), pp. 12-26; Dale R. Tahtinen, *The Arab-Israeli Military Balance Today* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1973); *The Military Balance 1971-72* (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1971); *The Military Balance 1972-1973* (London: IISS, 1973); *The Military Balance 1974-1975* (London: IISS, 1974); *Strategic Survey 1973*, (London: IISS, 1974).

⁸² Under a tripartite declaration issued on May 25, 1950, the United States, Britain, and France undertook to oppose an arms race between Israel and the Arab states. Despite this declaration, Israel managed to obtain arms from France with whom it began to develop close political, military relations. The text of the tripartite declaration may be found in Ralph H. Magnus (ed). *Documents on the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1969), pp. 163-4.

⁸³ J.C. Hurewitz, *Middle East Politics: The Military Dimension* (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 1360.

⁸⁴ *The Military Balance 1974-1975*, p. 32. The Egyptian defense expenditure from 1952-52 to 1966-67 may be found in Hurewitz; annual defense expenditures since then are available in the appropriate issue of *The Military Balance*.

parity with Israel merely by acquiring massive supplies of military equipment from abroad. The June 1967 war, however, seems to have changed this attitude. The Egyptian government began to place heavier emphasis on training and on attracting the better educated citizens to the armed forces. The level of education in Egypt has been far below the education level in Israel where over 90 percent of the Jewish population is literate, as contrasted with the Egyptian literacy figure which is about 30 percent. Because the general level of education and health was rather low, the Egyptian draftee took much longer to be trained than his counterpart in Israel. Furthermore, there was and continues to remain, a wide social gap between the Egyptian soldier who generally comes from the village or a small agricultural town and the officer who generally comes from a middle class urban background with at least a high school diploma and an equivalent of a college degree from one of the three service academies. Immediately after the June 1967 war, the maximum eligible age for admission to the military academy was raised from 21.5 years to 22.5 years and the minimum grade requirement was withdrawn. This was considered necessary to meet the immediate needs of the military, which had lost thousands of officers in the Six Day War. The previous conditions were, however, reinstated as soon as enough manpower became available in 1969. Similarly in 1969 the Egyptian air force, recognizing the need for a better educated officer, began for the first time to accept college graduates up to 24 years of age. Almost all of the Egyptian pilots have been trained by Soviet instructors either in Egypt or the Soviet Union, especially in the Ukraine where a special school for training Egyptian pilots was established by the U.S.S.R.⁸⁵ In spite of these other efforts, the non-commissioned officer ranks are still short of technicians.

Although all branches of the Egyptian armed forces are continuously being strengthened, the greatest emphasis is placed on the army and the air force. The army is largely an infantry force. Since it operates in areas most suitable for tank warfare, the Egyptian army has procured a large number of T-54/55 and T-34 tanks. In addition, the Egyptian army had been receiving from the Soviet Union consignments of JS-3 heavy tanks since 1968. The total number of these tanks, however, remained small and did not exceed 50 before

⁸⁵Harvey H. Smith and William W. Cover, *et al.*, *Area Handbook for UAR* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 466.

the October War.⁸⁶ In the 1967 war, the Egyptian army lost the major portion of its tank force, which was estimated by the Institute for Strategic Studies to be 250. By 1973, the army's manpower strength had grown from 140,000 to 280,000 and its tank force to 2,060.

Similarly, having lost most of its MIG fighters, all of its TU-16 medium bombers, and IL-28 bombers during the Six Day War, the Egyptian air force began to rebuild its strength soon after the hostilities ended and by the end of 1968, it had acquired twice as many combat aircraft as it had possessed before the June war.⁸⁷ By the beginning of October 1973, the Egyptian air force had acquired 568 combat aircrafts and had increased its manpower strength from 15,000, plus 4,000 reservists, to 28,000, plus a built up strength of 20,000 reservists.⁸⁸ It should be noted that most of the increase in the aircraft inventory was in the interceptor fighter type (which could be used for offensive purposes) and not in the bomber type of aircraft. It should be further noticed that the number of IL-28 light jet bombers, which stood at 40 in 1968-69, dramatically went down to 10 in 1972-73 and that since the October War there are perhaps no more than 5 IL-28 bombers in the Egyptian inventory.⁸⁹ This reduction probably reflected Egyptian realism about the impossibility of penetrating Israeli defenses in the Sinai. Therefore, in keeping with the Egyptian strategy to prevent Israeli deep-penetration raids the Egyptian air force, with the help of the Soviet Union, constructed an air defense system along the Nile Valley and also acquired from the Soviet Union a number of MIG 21 Js, the radar equipped all-weather

⁸⁶ According to the *Military Balance 1974-1975*, the Egyptian army possessed the following equipment: 2,000 Js-3/T-10hy, T-54/55, T-62 med. tks., PT-76 lt. tks.; 2,000 BTR-40, BTR-50P, BTR-60P, OT-64 and BTR-152 APC; 100 BMP-76PB; about 120 SU-100 and JSU-152 SP guns; about 1,200 122 mm, 130mm, and 152mm guns and howitzers; 8-inch guns; 40 203 mm how; 420 RL; about 900 57mm, 85mm and 100mm ATK guns; Sagger, Swatter, Snapper ATGW; 18 FROG-7, and some Samlet SSM; ZSU-23-4, ZSU-57-2 SP AA guns; SA-6, SA-7. Probably, these figures do not reflect the losses suffered during the October War and the replacements received since then. Tahtinen, *The Arab-Israeli Military Balance Today*, p. 22.

⁸⁷ In 1967, the Egyptian air force was reported to have 220 combat planes of different types; in 1968-69, it had acquired 400 planes, including 40 SU-7 fighter-bombers which were reported to have been delivered in response to the U.S. decision, of October 1968, to supply F-4E fighter-bomber/interceptors to Israel.

⁸⁸ *The Military Balance 1974-1975*, pp. 32-33.

⁸⁹ Tahtinen, *The Arab-Israeli Military Balance Today*, p. 5; *The Military Balance 1974-1975*, p. 33.

combat aircraft, for night interception.⁹⁰

The acquisition of arms did not, however, solve Egypt's military problems which were more serious in training technical personnel and in developing effective strategy and tactics against Israel than in maintaining the flow of arms from abroad. An accelerated training program for pilots was initiated soon after the hostilities ended in 1967. But even three years after this, President Nasser conceded that Egypt did not have enough qualified pilots to match the strength of the Israeli air force.⁹¹ This statement was made after the first group of 200 pilots had returned from the Soviet Union in the fall of 1969. Recognizing the need for enhancing the efficiency of the armed forces, the Egyptian government undertook a comprehensive program of training the armed forces in the use of the highly sophisticated Soviet weapons and of developing new military strategy and tactics against the Israeli occupation forces in the Sinai. For this purpose, the Egyptian government acquired the services of Soviet instructors and advisers who began to arrive in Egypt in small numbers (700-900) before the June war and later rapidly increased their strength to 15,000 by the time their mission was abruptly terminated by Sadat in July 1972.⁹²

In the same vein, the Egyptian government in 1968 made it obligatory for able-bodied college students to take military training. With the exception of graduate students and undergraduates over 28 years of age, all other students attending institutions of higher learning must fulfill this obligation before they are graduated. Although it is difficult to accurately assess the impact of this program, it is apparent that this program was designed more for creating a patriotic spirit and for establishing the fundamentals of discipline than for preparing the students for modern warfare.

While Egyptians were being trained to narrow the proficiency gap that existed between the Egyptian armed forces and that of Israel, Cairo

⁹⁰Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *The Arms Trade with the Third World* (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1971), p. 526.

⁹¹One qualified source estimates that Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq had a total of 600-700 qualified pilots and that Israel alone had between 800 and 900 qualified pilots. Egypt alone was reported to have lost 100 pilots during the Six Day War. The four Arab states had a total of 420 combat aircraft available to them in the June war; Israel had 230 combat aircraft available to it during the same period.

⁹²The total number of the Soviet advisers in 1968 was reported to be between 1,500 and 3,000; in 1970, it increased to about 10,000; in 1971, it was estimated to be 12,000 (SIPRI, p. 527; *Area Handbook for the UAR*, p. 457).

maintained a steady pressure on the Soviet Union to obtain the more sophisticated MIG-23s, which could, under appropriate conditions, match or even better the speed, the range, and the ceiling of the U.S.-made F-4. Although the Soviet Union was reported to have sent a squadron of MIG-23s to Egypt in 1971, the operational control over these planes remained with the Soviet pilots. The main purpose of the stationing of the MIG-23s in Egypt was to provide a deterrence against Israeli deep-penetration attacks while the SAM network was being constructed and extended to protect strategic areas in the country. Previously, it was assumed that the Soviet refusal to provide Egypt with the MIG-23s was based on the non-availability of qualified Egyptian pilots and the fear of compromising the secrets of the plane, which was one of the best combat planes available to the Russian armed forces.⁹³ However, it seems to us that the Russian refusal to supply Egypt with MIG-23s was based more on political factors than on technical and security reasons.

Soviet relations with Sadat have not been very cordial because of his continuous efforts to depolarize the Arab-Israeli conflict, a process aimed at increasing Egyptian-U.S. contacts and at reducing Egyptian reliance on the Soviet Union. In addition, Sadat's reputation as a conservative leader whose domestic and foreign policies seemed to be favorable to the "rightist" elements in the region created further problems between Moscow and Cairo. Recently, the Soviet Union has reportedly supplied an undisclosed number of MIG-23s to Syria, and the Russian instructors are currently in the process of training Syrian pilots for this plane. This is a clear signal to Sadat that for the Russians he is not indispensable for maintaining their influence in the Arab world. The delivery of MIG 23s to the Syrians could increase domestic pressure on Sadat for a more conciliatory policy toward the Soviet Union, a country which continues to reward its "allies" and "friends." Thus similar Soviet actions toward Syria and Iraq could effectively neutralize Sadat's criticism of the Soviet military aid policies toward Egypt. Currently, Sadat is in an unenviable position. With the exception of some spare parts and some replacement weapons lost in the October 1973 War, the Egyptian armed forces have not received any new equipment from the Soviet Union since the disengagement

⁹³Based on experiences with the Syrian and Egyptian forces, this Russian apprehension is understandable. In 1966, a Syrian pilot had defected to Israel with a MIG-21; and in the June 1967 war, the Israelis were reported to have captured an Egyptian SU-7 intact. Tahtinen, *The Arab-Israeli Military Balance Today*, p. 16, footnotes nos. 27 and 29.

agreement was signed between Egypt and Israel.⁹⁴ Israel, on the other hand, claims to be stronger now than it was before the October 1973 War. This leaves Egypt without any credible threat to resume hostilities if Israel does not agree to a withdrawal from the Sinai within a reasonable period of time. Sadat could, of course, resume hostilities with the equipment and the forces at his disposal. But such an action would probably cause heavy damage to the Egyptian armed forces and, above all, would undermine the confidence the Arabs had achieved as a result of the Egyptian and Syrian military gains in the initial days of the October War. These military gains have destroyed the myth of Israeli invincibility, and military superiority. The October War had proved to the Arabs that they were capable of waging modern warfare against an Israel that held technological and scientific superiority over its Arab adversaries. Without adequate preparations, another war with Israel could destroy the psychological confidence which has allowed the Egyptians to show willingness to accept Israel's existence as an independent state.

In an effort to diversify its sources of weapons acquisition, Egypt has been endeavoring to seek modern weapons from non-Soviet sources. Before the October War, Sadat had tried to purchase the Anglo-French Jaguar supersonic strike fighter. His request, however, was reportedly turned down because of the French and British embargo on the sale of arms to countries directly involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The French, nevertheless, agreed to sell to Libya 110 mirages, 38 of which were delivered to Libya before the war and were reportedly stationed in Egypt during this period.⁹⁵ Under a military cooperation agreement with Libya, Egyptian pilots were trained to fly the Mirage before the October War.⁹⁶ Because of the Libyan-Egyptian rift, these Mirages, 100 tanks, and an artillery regiment station in Egypt, were returned to Libya during September and October 1974.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ On September 11, 1974, the Lebanese daily *Beirut* reported that the Soviets had airlifted new weapons to Egypt, including 50 MIG-23s. This report however, was not confirmed by other sources. President Sadat has continued to insist that no new Soviet planes have arrived in Egypt since the October War. *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 38 (23 September 1974), n.p.

⁹⁵ *The Military Balance 1974-1975*, p. 33.

⁹⁶ Joseph Fitchett, "New Arms Race Threatened in Mideast," *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 30, 1974, pp. 1 and 6.

⁹⁷ "Sadat Says Egypt Lost 6,000 men," *The Washington Post*, October 8, 1974, p. A16.

The lifting of the French arms embargo in August 1974, has opened up new prospects for Egypt to acquire new sophisticated French weapons either directly or through a third party willing to act on Cairo's behalf. Two such arrangements have already been reported by the press. In a dispatch from Beirut, Joseph Fitchett reports that Kuwait will be allowed to purchase the Anglo-French Jaguar and that Kuwait can now be expected to give Egyptian pilots access to its Jaguars.⁹⁸ According to a story in *The New York Times*, Saudi Arabia has ordered 36 Mirage Vs for use by Egypt. Of this order, 3 Mirages were reported to have been delivered to Egypt in November 1974.⁹⁹

While Egypt is endeavoring to acquire weapons through third parties, it also is engaged in making direct approaches to France, Britain, and the United States for a variety of weapons systems. In June 1974, *An Nahar* reported that a U.S. defense department team would go to Cairo to determine Egypt's need for American weapons. Although nothing significant seems to have come out of this effort, Egyptian endeavors in London and Paris were more successful.¹⁰⁰ Britain's aircraft industry was reported to be willing to supply Egypt with means to build its own battlefield helicopters and fighter-trainer planes.¹⁰¹ Similarly, the French government seems to have indicated its willingness to sell sophisticated arms directly to Egypt. According to news dispatches from Paris and Cairo, President Sadat, during his recent official visit to France, purchased large quantities of French combat planes, electronic equipment, tanks, missiles, helicopters, and radar systems. It is assumed that King Feisal has agreed to share the major portion of the cost of this equipment.¹⁰²

It should be noted that even if Sadat succeeded in acquiring all the equipment he wanted from the French, the Egyptian armed forces would still not be as well equipped as that of Israel whose U.S.-built F-4 is superior to that of the French Mirage. Furthermore, while Egypt is seeking to catch

⁹⁸ "New Arms Race Threatened in Mideast," p. 6.

⁹⁹ *The New York Times*, November 20, 1974, p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 26 (1 July 1974), n.p. Making the announcement of the forthcoming visit by a group of U.S. military officers, Pentagon officials emphasized that the U.S. team had not been given the task to establish Egyptian military needs and that it had no authority to make recommendations on this subject. *The Washington Post*, June 20, 1974, p. A27.

¹⁰¹ *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 40 (7 October 1974), n.p.

¹⁰² *The Washington Post*, January 25, 1975, p. A7.

up with Israel at least in the quality of armament, Israel is in the process of making a quantum jump in improving its arsenal by seeking to acquire a number of F-14 and F-15 airplanes from the U.S.¹⁰³ If Israel achieves an overwhelming superiority in combat planes and in electronic counter-measures that would effectively neutralize the Egyptian and Syrian missile and radar networks, Tel Aviv might not be able to resist the temptation to launch a preemptive strike against the Arabs whose military vulnerability seems to be increasing because of Soviet refusal to refurbish the Egyptian armed forces with new equipment. Such a recourse would, of course, destroy chances of an Arab-Israeli settlement for which the United States has been making strenuous efforts.¹⁰⁴

Although the Egyptian armed forces obtain most of their major weapon systems from abroad, some of the defense needs are met locally. In addition to small arms, artillery, and mortars, the Egyptian armament industry has produced a limited number of jet trainers. In the 1960s, Egypt with the help of German scientists, endeavored to develop three surface-to-surface missiles: the 235-mile-range *Al Zafir*, the 375-mile-range *Al Kahir*, and the 440-mile-range *Al Ared*. *Al Zafir* and *Al Kahir* were test fired on July 1962; and *Al Ared* on July 23, 1963. All three missiles were displayed in the Cairo military parade in 1965, but there has been no evidence that these missiles have become operational. Our assumption is that the withdrawal of most German scientists from Egypt following the crisis in Arab-German relations in 1965, brought the project to an end. It is plausible that the Egyptian government, with financial support from the Arab oil-producing states, will once again focus its attention on developing domestic defense capabilities.¹⁰⁵

The Egyptian government has been urging the Arab oil-producing states to pay serious attention to the idea of setting up a joint armament industry

¹⁰³ *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 8, 1974. According to this report, the Israeli air force commander, General Peled, had said that while the present strength of the Israeli air force would be sufficient to meet any Arab challenge, Israel needed the new planes (F-14s, F-15s) to maintain "control" of Middle East skies.

¹⁰⁴ In addition to the combat planes, Israel is reportedly seeking the Dragon anti-tank missile, the Strike anti-radar missile, the Lance ground-to-ground missile, and pilotless aircraft used as decoys and for reconnaissance. The Lance missile, which has a range of 30-40 miles, can also be fired from helicopters and can carry either a conventional or mini-nuclear warhead. Christopher Dobson, "Is Israel Combat-ready?" *Sunday Telegraph*, November 24, 1974, excerpts in *Atlas World Press Review*, vol. 22, no. 1 (January 1975), p. 39.

¹⁰⁵ SIPRI, *The Arms Trade with the Third World*, pp. 723-753. This

which would reduce their reliance on foreign weapons. In this connection, the chiefs of staff of the members of the Arab League have recommended the investment of 2 per cent of national revenues for the establishment of a joint armament industry. General Saaduddin Shazli, the then Egyptian chief of staff, contended that if the Arab states accepted this recommendation, they could overtake the Israelis in weapons production within five years.¹⁰⁶ While it is not yet known whether or not this recommendation will be accepted by the Arab states, press reports indicate that the French government might be amenable to setting up assembly plants for the Mirage in the region. Even if the Arab countries were to accept this recommendation, it would be a long time before Egypt could become self-sufficient in producing sophisticated weapons systems. In the meantime, Cairo will continue its endeavors to find foreign sources to meet its defense needs. Presently, it seems that France will become a major source of arms for Egypt and several other Arab states.

Economic Programs

At the same time that it asseverates the socialist character of the country and guarantees private ownership against unlawful expropriation and sequestration, the Egyptian constitution enunciates the following major economic objectives:¹⁰⁷

- to increase the national income through a comprehensive development plan;
- to assure just distribution of the national wealth;
- to raise the standard of living;
- to increase work opportunities;
- to link wages with production;
- to narrow income differentials by guaranteeing a minimum wage and fixing a maximum wage;
- to acquire and maintain public control of all means of production;
- to secure participation of the workers in the management of public and private enterprises;

¹⁰⁵ *con't* section also deals with the abortive Indian-Egyptian effort to fit the Egyptian E-300 turbojet engine with the Indian HAL airframe. After the June 1967 war, the Egyptians ceased the effort to produce the jet engine. *The Military Balance 1971-1972*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁶ *An Nahar*, vol. no. 1 (1 January 1973), n.p.

¹⁰⁷ *Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt* (1971), Chapter II, articles 23-39.

● to implement profit-sharing programs for the benefit of the workers;¹⁰⁸
and

● to allocate to public cooperative and private sectors equitable responsibilities in the development projects of the country.

Although the permanent constitution was adopted only in 1971, some of the economic goals and welfare principles which it contains have been the basis of the country's development program since the mid 1950s. After the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company on July 26, 1956, "planning," "welfare," and "nationalization" became three pillars of "Arab Socialism" which was designed to create a socialist-type economic system in the country. Throughout this period, economic policy has been aimed at self-sufficiency through import substitutes, promotion of export-oriented industries, establishment of heavy industry, rural industrialization, and on expanding basic key industries. As the state enlarged its economic role and gradually brought all industry, transportation, banking, and import-export trade under its monopoly, the economy itself became more "socialized" and bureaucratized."¹⁰⁹ This rapid expansion of the bureaucracy is considered to be the most important institutional change to have taken place in the Egyptian economy. The existence of a large bureaucracy is not a new phenomenon in Egypt, from the ancient times to the present, Egyptian rulers have depended on the bureaucracy for an effective control over the country's resources. However, Arab socialism has impelled the bureaucracy into areas in which, at least from the middle of the 19th century, "it had no functions, and has entangled the country in 'red tape' to an extent never seen before."¹¹⁰

Since the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, the Egyptian efforts at industrialization have overwhelmingly depended on financial and technological aid from the Soviet Union and East European states. As a result of this dependence, the choice of technique in industrialization "has tended increasingly to be determined by the nature and capacity of the deliverers. With the shift in composition of foreign trade and aid toward the Communist countries, the West could offer a wider choice of more advanced techniques."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ In a move to attract foreign capital to Egypt, the People's Assembly, in June 1974, passed a law which freed foreign companies from the law requiring workers participation and profit-sharing. *The Washington Post*, June 11, 1974, p. A14.

¹⁰⁹ According to Bent Hansen, "Economic Development in Egypt," Chapter 2, *Economic Development and Population Growth in the Middle East*, edited by Charles A. Cooper and Sidney S. Alexander (New York: Elsevier, 1972), pp. 22-89 Egyptian expenditure on bureaucracy has doubled from 1959/60 when it spent 5 percent of the gross domestic product on administration to 10 percent in 1965/66.

¹¹⁰ Hansen, "Economic development in Egypt," p. 75.

¹¹¹ Hansen, "Economic development in Egypt," p. 80.

In an effort to reduce its dependence on the Communist states, Egypt has taken a number of economic and political steps designed to increase its economic and political intercourse with the West, which, Cairo hopes, would be willing to share its technological and financial resources with the country. In this connection, the Egyptian government under Sadat has moved toward more liberal economic policies. As mentioned above, the Egyptian government has eased restriction on business in the country, and it has created a number of "free zones" in Alexandria and in the Suez Canal Zone where foreign investors will be allowed to import industrial machinery free of duty and to export manufactured goods to other countries. In addition, foreign investors have been promised a five-year tax holiday, permission to repatriate profits and salaries of foreign experts, and even the initial investments after an agreed period. Furthermore, the Egyptian government has recently granted permission to foreign banks, including at least four American banks, to operate in the country. The four American banks given permission to operate in Egypt are: The Chase Manhattan, The Bank of America, The First National City, and the American Express Company. It is argued that the opening of these American banks will facilitate bilateral trade between Egypt and the United States.

While the American banks were being given permission to operate in the country, Egypt and the United States signed a number of other agreements designed to expand economic ties between the two countries. The two countries agreed to:¹¹²

- form a joint Project Development Institute, to be located in Cairo, that will evaluate Egypt's economic development plans;
- negotiate a tax equalization treaty to avoid double taxation of American firms doing business in Egypt;
- facilitate cooperative and joint ventures among appropriate governmental and private institutions;
- encourage increased trade between the two countries;

¹¹²*The Washington Post*, July 17, 1974, p. E1; text of Egyptian-U.S. joint communique issued in Cairo on June 14, 1974, in *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 25 (24 June 1974), n.p. New Egyptian laws on foreign investments allow non-Arab foreign investors to repatriate profit made on export of goods manufactured in the country; profit made on local sale are excluded from this provision. Arab investors may repatriate all their profit, whether made on local sale or on export. On January 6, 1975, the first joint banking venture to be set up under the "open door" policy was formally created by the Bank Misr (51 percent share) and three foreign banks: The First National of Chicago, Banco di Roma Holdings of Luxemburg, and UBAF Limited of London.

- make special efforts to increase tourism in both directions;
- establish a joint cooperation commission headed by the respective foreign ministers of the two countries;
- set up a joint working group on Suez Canal reconstruction and development to consider and review plans for reopening the Suez Canal and reconstruction of the cities along the canal;
- set up a joint working group to investigate and recommend measures designed to open the way for United States private investment in joint ventures in Egypt and to promote trade between the two countries ;
- set up a joint working group on agriculture to study and recommend actions designed to increase Egypt's agricultural production;
- set up a joint working group on technology, research, and development in scientific fields, including space, with special emphasis on exchange of scientists; and
- set up a joint working group on medical cooperation to assist Egypt in strengthening its medical research treatment and training facilities.

In addition to signing bilateral agreements with the United States, Egypt also entered into similar arrangements with Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates(UAE), West Germany, France, and Japan. Even before the Shah's official visit to Egypt in January 1975, Iran and Egypt had entered into a number of financial and technical cooperation agreements which would assure about \$800 million of Iranian investments in Egypt and would greatly expand trade between the two countries.¹¹³

Similarly, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have entered into a series of financial and commercial agreements designed to strengthen the economy of Egypt and its ties with Riyadh. The two countries have agreed to:

¹¹³ On November 25, 1974, Egypt and Iran signed an agreement for technical and financial cooperation between the two countries. This agreement created a joint Egyptian-Iranian Investment Bank, with a capital of \$20 million, for the purposes of financing projects in Egypt and Iran. Under this accord, the two parties expressed their initial agreement to establish in Suez a \$300-million nitrogen fertilizer and phosphate plant that will produce ammonia, uric fertilizer, sulphuric acid, phosphoric acid, and super phosphate, utilizing phosphorous from Egypt and sulphur ore from Iran. Other agreements deal with a cotton textile project and the establishment of two joint companies for engineering investments and for installation works in the Port Said area. Iran agreed to give Egypt a loan of \$250 million for this project. (Middle East News Agency [MENA] broadcast from Cairo. November 25, 1974, as reported by FBIS, November 26, 1974, pp. D-7-8.)

- form a joint Egyptian-Saudi reconstruction company with a capital of \$50 million, to be shared equally. The aim of the company is to invest in reconstruction projects in Egypt.

- form a joint Egyptian-Saudi Industrial Investment company with a capital of \$100 million. This company will make investments in industrial development projects in Egypt.¹¹⁴

In addition to approving a \$700-million loan to Cairo, Iraq also formed with Egypt a holding company called the Arab Industrial Development company with a capital of \$350 million on a 50-50 partnership basis. This company will undertake to build factories for manufacturing tractors, automobiles, and other engineering industries.¹¹⁵

Egypt has entered into similar financial arrangements with Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE that will provide Cairo with about \$2 billion in loans and grants during the next two to three years.¹¹⁶

It is evident that the new "open door" policy being pursued by Sadat and the changed political and psychological climate in the country have attracted considerable Arab capital to Egypt. These factors also have encouraged Japan and a number of Western European states to extend loans to the Egyptian government, which is seeking more technology than financial aid from Europe and Japan. Japan has signed a \$175 million agreement for widening and deepening the Suez Canal; this project will take about 3.5 years. Japan, West Germany, and Brazil have jointly agreed to set up an iron and steel complex in one of the free zones near Alexandria. This project, which will cost 60 million Egyptian pounds (E£100=U.S. \$256.00) will have a production capacity of 1,600,000 tons annually. Production is scheduled to begin in the second half of 1977.

The Egyptian development strategy seems to be directed toward acquiring modern technology through triangular business and commercial agreements financed by oil-producing Arab states with surplus petro dollars available

¹¹⁴ *FBIS*, November 19, 1974, p. C-4.

¹¹⁵ *FBIS*, November 19, 1974, p. E-1.

¹¹⁶ During Prime Minister Hijazi's trip to Kuwait in December 1974, the Kuwait government promised \$1,300 million in aid and grants to Egypt. Earlier, Hijazi had secured \$1,195 million from the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The money will be used in joint housing, industrial, and other projects in Egypt. *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 46 (2 December 1974), pp. 1-2.

for investment abroad. Currently France and Britain are leading all other European states and Japan in their willingness and ability to transfer modern technology to Egypt through the military and civilian projects being jointly financed by Egypt and its oil-producing Arab friends. Some of this technology--the British Leyland proposed assembly plant for Land Rovers, for example--might not be as sophisticated as Egypt would like to acquire, but the fact that new sources of technology are now available to Egypt is in itself significant. For technology, Egypt no longer need rely solely on Soviet and East European technology that in most cases is less sophisticated than European, Japanese and U.S. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that the Western European states, Britain, and Japan, given their energy and business needs, would refuse to help Egypt in acquiring and broadening its technological base in the more complex fields of nuclear energy, space, computers, and communications.

Egyptian economic policies, as reflected in the new liberalized laws and in the 10-year development plan (1973-1982), indicate that the Egyptian government is determined to alleviate the social and economic problems created by shortages of many basic commodities like sugar, tea, meat, rice, soap, and matches.¹¹⁷ While industrial plans are being implemented to make Egypt self-sufficient in consumer goods, the government has entered into bilateral agreements which would allow it to import essential goods in short supply from a variety of foreign sources, including the United States, Australia, France, Japan, and other industrial centers. Recently, the United States government agreed to allow Egypt to purchase a total of 300,000 tons of wheat for a sum of \$56.2 million. In addition, the U.S. agreed to provide Egypt with \$10 million worth of tobacco and 60,000 bales of cotton for domestic consumption. Altogether, the Egyptian government spent E£ 200 million on importing consumer goods during 1974, and indications were that in order to keep the population content, Egypt would have to spend more money on importing consumer goods and basic commodities.

¹¹⁷ *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 42 (21 October 1974) p. 3; Henry Tanner, "Shortages in Egypt's Shops Provoke Bitter Debate," *The New York Times*, September 4, 1974. Tanner reports that Western industrialists have been told by Egyptian officials that the "need now is for Western technology, and that money is no longer a problem."

The foreign exchange value of the consumer goods aside, the Egyptian government spends E£ 350 million annually on maintaining the stability of prices of basic consumer goods.¹¹⁸

A quick look at the main targets of the 10-year plan, given below, shows that the industrial sector is scheduled to receive by far the largest share of capital investment amounting to E£ 2,700 million (34.06 percent) of the total sum of E£ 7,925 million for the entire plan. Transportation and communications are projected to receive 21.45 percent of the total, followed by housing, 13.88 percent and agriculture 12.61 percent.¹¹⁹

	(E£ in million) 1973-77	% of Projected Total	(E£ in million) 1978-82	% of Projected Total	(E£ in million) Total Period	%
Industry	1,000	33.27	1,700	34.55	2,700	34.06
Agriculture	400	13.31	600	12.19	1,000	12.61
Transportation & Communication	700	23.29	1,000	20.32	1,700	21.45
Electric Power	200	6.65	400	8.13	600	7.57
Housing	350	11.64	750	15.24	1,100	13.88
Public Utilities	130	4.32	195	3.96	325	4.10
Social Sciences	225	7.48	275	5.58	500	6.30
Total	3,005	99.96	4,920	99.97	7,925	99.97

In terms of its physical targets, the 10-year plan is projected to achieve the following:¹²⁰

- Double the real gross national income from E£ 2,867 million in 1972 to E£ 5,735 million. This would require a sustained annual increase of 7.2 percent.

¹¹⁸Statement by Dr. Abd al-Qadir Hatim, deputy prime minister and minister of information, government of Egypt. Dr. Hatim said that of the 350 million pounds for subsidies, 250 million pounds are spent to maintain the present low price of bread, which was being sold for 5 milliemes but costs 25 milliemes. Other essential items which were being subsidized were wheat, cotton, rice, sugar, kerosene, and cooking oil. (Cairo Domestic Service April 1, 1974 as monitored by FBIS, April 2, 1974, p. D12). *An Nahar*, vol. 6, no. 4 (27 January 1975) reports that during 1975, Egypt will spend E£ 640 million on food subsidies.

¹¹⁹*An Nahar*, vol. 3, no. 47 (20 November 1972), n.p.

¹²⁰National Bank of Egypt, "Economic Bulletin," vol. XVI, no. 1 (1973), p. 17; and the Central Bank of Egypt, *Annual Report 1971-1972*, p. 2, in Albert L. Gray, Jr., "Egypt's Ten Year Plan: 1973-1982," paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Boston, Mass., November 7, 1974, pp. 2-3.

- Raise the per capita annual income from E£ 80 in 1972 to E£ 125.
- Increase agricultural production by 42 percent.
- Create 3 million new jobs.
- Reach an equilibrium in the nation's balance of trade by the end of 1977, using the surplus thereafter to repay foreign debts and build up the nation's reserves. (This will perhaps be one of the most difficult goals to achieve.)

During the past 20 years, Egypt has incurred a large amount of foreign debt to a number of countries (the United States, West Germany, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and several other European and Arab countries). Moreover, although no exact figures on Egyptian indebtedness are available in public records, it is estimated that Cairo owes over \$4 billion to Moscow alone.¹²¹ Prior to the cancellation of Brezhnev's visit to Egypt scheduled for January 1975, there were reports that the Soviet Union had agreed to reschedule Egypt's debt. Since the cancellation, however, Sadat has disclosed Moscow's refusal to reschedule the debt.¹²² Although Egypt has been promised close to \$3 billion in economic aid and grants by the Arab oil-producing states and by Iran, most of this fund is tied to specific projects and thus is not available for paying foreign debts. Therefore, in order for Egypt to meet its foreign debt obligations it will have to strain its meager sources of foreign exchange that are direly needed for defense and social projects.

Despite the Soviet-Egyptian rift, Moscow has continued to show its interest and willingness to help Cairo in the industrialization of the country. In July 1974, *Al-Ahram* reported that the Soviet Union had agreed to carry out a number of industrial projects in Egypt at a cost of 120 million rubles (about \$161 million). This accord was reportedly reached during a visit to Moscow of Egypt's minister of industry who signed, according to

¹²¹ *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 40 (October 7, 1974), p. 3. In 1971-72 Egypt spent E£ 352.8 million in servicing and repayments of external debts, an increase of E£ 128.0 million over the previous year. Egypt's overdue debt to West Germany reached about DM 460 million in the middle of 1973--in addition to another DM 400 million not yet due. In 1972, West Germany and the United States agreed to re-schedule their respective loans owed by Egypt.

¹²² According to a report in *An Nahar* vol. 5, no. 50 (16 December 1974), the Soviets had agreed to reschedule Egypt's debt which "amounts to about \$500 million." Earlier, this weekly said that the Egyptian debt to the Soviet Union is about \$400 million.

the newspaper story, three agreements with the Soviet Union. Among others, the projects included the expansion of Egypt's aluminum production from 100,000 tons annually to 166,000 tons.¹²³ In October, the Egyptian minister of planning, Ismail Sabry Abdullah, announced that the Soviet Union had agreed to participate in two major industrial projects in Egypt--an iron and steel complex in Alexandria and an aluminum factory in upper Egypt. The minister said that Moscow has further agreed to enlarge the Soviet-built and Soviet-financed Helwan iron and steel complex at a cost of \$100 million. In addition, the Soviet Union agreed to provide Egypt with a \$50 million loan to finance economic projects over the next 14 months and to reactivate long-promised economic aid.¹²⁴ In December, there were unconfirmed reports circulating in the press which suggested that, because of the Egyptian-U.S. disagreement over the sale of a U.S. nuclear reactor to Egypt, Cairo had turned to Moscow for the purchase of a Soviet nuclear reactor. *An Nahar* reported that the Soviet Union had agreed to meet the Egyptian request.

Although Egyptian-Soviet relations have further deteriorated in recent months, we believe that their economic and industrial ties will not radically change in the immediate foreseeable future. This is because of technical and economic factors which have tied Egypt firmly with the Soviet Union and the East European states. It has been estimated that 90 percent of Egypt's modern industry has been imported from the Soviet Union and its Communist allies. Furthermore, since the June 1967 war, the Soviet Union has become the principal trading partner of Egypt. For example, in 1971, Egypt's imports from the Soviet Union were valued at E£ 54.0 million; in the same year, its exports to Russia were valued at E£ 136.2 million. Egypt's total imports during that year stood at E£ 400 million and its exports at E£ 343.2. Although the 1972 figures showed a slight decline, the Soviet Union remained by far the principal customer of Egyptian goods and services, which for that year were valued at E£ 126.0 million (exports to Russia); and Cairo imported E£ 51.9 million worth of goods from the Soviet Union. During that year, Egypt's total imports amounted to E£ 381.4 million; and its exports at E£ 358.8 million. While these figures by themselves are high enough, when we add Egyptian trade with East European states and take

¹²³ *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 26, 1974. p. 8.

¹²⁴ *The New York Times*, October 29, 1974, p. 7.

into consideration the categories of Egyptian imports and exports, we soon realize the magnitude of Egypt's efforts to reorient its trade relations. In 1971, Egyptian imports from East European states (Czechoslovakia, GDR, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Romania) totaled E£ 58.20 million and its exports to them totaled E£ 53.0 million. In other words, of its total E£ 743.2 million external trade in 1971, Egypt traded goods and services worth E£ 301.4 million with the Soviet Union and its five socialist allies, that is, a little less than 50 percent of its total external trade. In 1972, Egypt's total external trade stood at E£ 740.2 million and its trade with the Soviet Union and East European states was valued at E£ 298.50 million.

It is significant to note that in recent years raw materials and industrial equipment have accounted for half of all Soviet exports to Egypt, while the Soviet Union has taken about 30 percent of all manufactured goods exported by Egypt. During the heyday of Soviet-Egyptian friendship, bilateral agreements were made between the two countries to establish in Egypt a number of manufacturing units specifically designed to produce goods for Soviet markets. Some of these units are reportedly in the production stage, while others are being built under the previous arrangements. With the completion of these factories, Egyptian exports to the Soviet Union will increase and this will help in the reduction of Egyptian debt to Moscow. It is argued that the Soviet Union will continue to provide Egypt with technical aid for industrialization. This will not only help the Soviet Union in maintaining its presence in Egypt but also in realizing the economic and commercial benefits that have been calculated into Soviet economic development plans. On its part, Egypt would be well advised to maintain good commercial relations with the Soviet Union because otherwise Egyptian manufactured products would not find many profitable markets elsewhere.¹²⁵

In summation, it may be recalled that the Egyptian ten-year plan, the "transitional plan," and the annual development and ordinary budgets--all these documents focus primary attention on industrialization of the country. In each case, the industrial sector receives the lion's share of the budget. It is evident that the Egyptian government is determined to carry out a rapid industrialization of the country, and for this purpose Cairo is offering liberal incentives to foreign investors willing to participate in the government's

¹²⁵ Egyptian trade figures were obtained from *Europa, The Middle East and North Africa 1974-75*, (London: Europa Publication, 1974), pp. 297-299; information on Egyptian manufactured goods come from *An Nahar*, vol. 3 no. 47 (20 November 1972), n.p.

industrial endeavor. It is through rapid industrialization that the government hopes to alleviate economic hardships of the people, most of whom live in thousands of villages in the ten-mile agricultural belt along the Nile River. Although the government has recently come under strong criticism for its "neglect" of the agricultural sector, which still accounts for 30 percent of the GDP, it is our contention that Egypt has reached the limit beyond which further efforts at land reclamation would prove to be exorbitantly costly and thus counterproductive to the country's goals of economic development. This is not to suggest that there is no room for increasing the agricultural yield by the extensive use of fertilizers and rotation of crops. While the Egyptian government does have extensive plans for the manufacture and distribution of fertilizers, it does not have plans to open up new large agricultural zones in the country. This is primarily due to the fact that the land to be reclaimed is often arid desert and the cost of reclamation is much higher than the short-term expected results. Therefore, the government prefers to invest in manufacturing industry, where returns to the scarce capital may well be higher than in agriculture.¹²⁶

Although the promises of about \$3 billion in economic aid and grants from the Arab oil producers and from Iran have alleviated the Egyptian deficiency in foreign capital, Egypt still needs to import technology for which she is looking to the West and Japan for help. In such projects as iron and steel, aluminum, and number of others that were designed, financed, and constructed by the Soviet Union and East European states, Egypt will, of necessity, continue to rely on them for spare parts and for expansion of the projects. For the establishment of new industries, however, Egypt is turning to the West for technological and, in some cases, financial aid for which Cairo is offering generous incentives to potential investors.

Social Programs

In an major statement to a joint session of the ASU Central Committee

¹²⁶We do not wish to suggest that Egypt has no reclamation projects currently being carried out. We are aware of the Lake Manzala project which is designed to reclaim about 500,000 feddan (1 feddan = 1.038 acres). The point is that Egypt has severe land and water limitations which make it extremely difficult to expand agricultural areas for the growing population. At 5.5 persons per acre, Egypt has one of the highest man/land ratios in the world. Currently, Egypt loses 25,000 feddans annually to housing, and as the population increases this loss will increase proportionately (Europa, *The Middle East*, p. 284-286). In the production of fertilizer, Egypt plans to be self-sufficient by 1977.

and People's Assembly on April 18, 1974, President Sadat set down five major social goals for Egypt. They are:

- social development and the building of the individual;
- entering the age of science and technology;
- cultural progress based on science and faith;
- an open society enjoying the currents of freedom; and
- a secure society in which every citizen is reassured about his present and future.¹²⁷

President Sadat said that social development must take place within "our spiritual and ethical values" that alone can save the Egyptians from suffering the adverse affects of material affluence which the "age of science and technology" would bring to the country. He went on to say that the Egyptian people "adhere to the principles of social solidarity, cohesion of the family, and the prevalence of the sentiments of love and rejection of rancor." These principles, he said, were "a fence against absolute individual whims and social irresponsibility."¹²⁸

Through the achievement of these social goals, Sadat hopes to create a "new Egyptian man" who, while immersed in national, cultural, and spiritual values, will be modern in outlook, educated, and shorn of fanaticism and the spirit of fatalism "falsely attributed to the people."¹²⁹

With these goals in view, the Egyptian government would like to undertake a "comprehensive revolution in the systems and concepts of education and general culture in all their forms and at all their levels, starting with the elimination of illiteracy and then proceeding to general, technical and college education and then to scientific and technological research."¹³⁰

The Egyptian government is striving to provide educational facilities to all sections of the country; primary education is theoretically free and compulsory for children between ages 6 and 12, but rapidly increasing population is retarding the government's efforts to provide enough facilities and trained teachers to meet the demand. Tuition is also free in secondary

¹²⁷Text of President Sadat's "October Papers" as reported in *Al-Ahram*, April 19, 1974, in *FBIS* (Supplement 26, no. 93) May 13, 1974.

¹²⁸"October Papers," p. 32.

¹²⁹"October Papers," p. 31.

¹³⁰"October Papers," p. 23.

schools and in institutions of higher learning. The expansion of educational facilities at the secondary and university levels has rapidly increased the number of high school and college graduates, primarily majoring in social sciences and humanities. Despite the government's efforts to encourage vocational and technical training, the general educational trend continues to be in the direction of social sciences and humanities. This situation has created a massive surplus of college graduates with degrees in liberal arts who are automatically given jobs in the already overgrown bureaucracy. Thus, while the educational facilities have expanded rapidly, economic opportunities have not kept pace with them. On the other hand, there is a serious shortage of technicians and trained personnel at the middle level which slows down the rate of economic development in the country. To remedy this cyclical situation, it is necessary to provide better incentives to students for vocational and technical training.

Although the Egyptian government recognizes the need for better health and social services for the people, its annual and development budgets and its ten-year plan do not reflect significant concern in these sectors. In the 1971-72 annual budget, the Egyptian government allocated less than seven percent of the budget to health, social and religious services.¹³¹ The ten-year plan shows no substantial change in the percentage of allocation for this sector of the plan. Heavy defense expenditure, focus on industrialization that requires heavy capital outlay, and reconstruction of the canal zone cities, are primarily responsible for this neglect--a situation which recently came under criticism by a commission of the People's Assembly set up to examine the government budget for 1975. The commission noted with regret the government failure to appropriate enough funds for public health, education, agriculture, and rural electrification projects.¹³²

Realizing the social, political, and strategic risks inherent in the concentration of population and industry in the narrow valley of the Nile (which contains only 3-5 percent of the country's total area), the Egyptian government is planning new industrial parks and population centers in the

¹³¹ Europa, 1974-75, p. 296.

¹³² *An Nahar*, vol. 6, no. 4 (27 January 1975), n.p.

Sinai Peninsula as well as in the southern part of the country. By providing job opportunities and better social services to the people in the provinces, the government further hopes to discourage the country's surplus rural labor force from crowding the metropolitan areas, especially Cairo, and from overtaxing the already inadequate housing facilities, communication systems, and social services available in Cairo and Alexandria.

CHAPTER THREE. IRAQI INTERESTS AND POLICIES

THE POLICY-MAKING ENVIRONMENT

Steeped in the tradition of confessionalism and ethnic politics, Iraq remains a mosaic of confessional, ethnic, linguistic, ecological, and ideological groups, most of which function as interest groups in the country's political system. Iraq's political and cultural history has created serious impediments to developing a sense of territorial nationalism (*al-wataniya*) among the masses who continue to owe their principal allegiance to their religious and confessional groups.

Moreover, Iraq has a long history of confessional conflicts going back to the days of the Khalif Ali (656-661 A.D.) who became the parton saint of the first great schismatic sect of Islam. The Shiites, the followers of Ali have venerated him equally with, and on occasion more than, the prophet Mohammed. The Sunnites, the followers of the orthodox rites of Islam, have historically held the reigns of power in their hands, with the exception of a short interregnum between 1623 and 1638 when the Shia Safavide dynasty of Iran captured Baghdad and held most of Iraq until it was reconquered by the Sunni Ottomans, who ruled it until the end of World War I. The Hashemite dynasty, which ruled the country from 1921 to 1958, was also a Sunni ruling oligarchy. The Sunnis have been the ruling elite of the "revolutionary" period since 1958. The unwillingness of the Sunni minority to share power with the Shiites who claim a 55-60 percent majority in the country, has been one of the major impediments to effecting a political rapprochement between the Shiites and Sunnites, most of whom are ethnically and linguistically Arabs.¹

¹Although under the Hashemites, Shiites occasionally had achieved cabinet status, there was only one prime minister, Fadhil Jamali, who belonged to this community. A similar pattern is evident in the cabinets and revolutionary councils formed since 1958. While it is difficult to identify the religious affiliations of today's ruling elite in Iraq, it is certain that no more than two or three members of the 13-member Baath Regional Command are Shiites, and that none of the present 6-member Revolutionary Command Council, the highest ruling authority in the country, is a Shia. In the cabinet appointed after the Arif-Bakr Coup of 1963 there were five Shiites and three Kurdish ministers. Majid Khadduri, *Republican Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics Since 1958*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p 198.

Ethnically, the Iraqi population can be divided into two major and several minor groups. Accounting for about 80 percent of the total estimated Iraqi population of ten million, the Arabs form a dominant ethnic and linguistic majority in the country. They are followed by the Kurds who account for about 15 percent of the population. With the exception of a few Shiites, most Kurds are Sunnites, but their religious practices differ in some respects from those of Sunni Arabs. Most of the Iraqi Kurds live in the north and northeast areas of the country, a region contiguous with the Kurdish zones of Turkey and Iran. Since the end of World War I, Kurdish nationalism has been manifesting itself in the form of demands and struggle for local autonomy and outright independence. Just as Arab nationalism developed partly as a reaction to Turkish nationalism, Kurdish nationalism, after World War II, became a more significant movement, in part as a reaction to Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism that the Kurds perceived as a threat to their identity and status in Iraq.²

Kurdish nationalism in Iraq has led to brief periods of Kurdish unity, but inter-tribal rivalries and conflicts between modern and traditional Kurds have often created problems in negotiating terms of agreements with the Arabs. Although most, if not all, Kurds agree that Kurdish identity must be preserved and that some of the wealth from the Kurdish lands (especially the oil revenues from the Kirkuk oil fields) ought to be used for development projects in the Kurdish region, there is little else that could be construed as a common demand of the Kurds. In their official demands, the Iraqi Kurds have not sought independence from Baghdad, nor have they shown much sustained interest in the idea of a Kurdish state to be carved out of Iraq, Turkey, and Iran.

For the Iraqi government, the Kurdish problem has been a continuous source of civil strife, political instability, and a serious drain on the country's economic, military, and human resources. In addition, the Kurdish problem has caused military confrontation between Iraq and Iran

²David Adamson, *The Kurdish War* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964); Hasan Arfa, *The Kurds: An Historical and Political Study* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966); Cecil J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks and Arabs: Politics, Travel and Research in North-Eastern Iraq* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957); Dana Adams Schmidt, *Journey Among Brave Men* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964).

because, for a variety of political and strategic reasons, Iran is using the Kurds as a means of pressure on the Baathist regime in Baghdad. (The Kurdish problem will be discussed in more detail in a later section.)

In addition to the Arabs and the Kurds, who make up about 95 percent of the Iraqi population, other ethnic groups in the country are: the Turkomans, (2-3 percent), the Persians, the Lurs, the Armenians, and the Jews (2 percent). Although these groups are active in the fields of agriculture and trade, they play practically no role in the decision-making process of the country.

But the divisions within the population of Iraq do not end with confessional and ethnic groups. Other divisions arise due to linguistic, ecological, educational, and ideological differences. For example, although Arabic is the official language of the country, at least 20 percent of the population speaks Kurdish, Turkoman, and Farsi. Of these three languages, only Kurdish was accepted as the language of education for the Kurds in their region. The March 11, 1970 agreement, which temporarily halted the war between the Kurds and the Iraqi government forces, stipulated, *inter alia*, that although Kurdish would be taught to Kurdish students in schools in the Kurdish region, Arabic would remain compulsory for all children in Iraqi schools. This provision, while satisfying the cultural needs of the Kurds, would, it was hoped, create a linguistic link between the Arab majority and the Kurdish minority. It is interesting to note, however, that no similar requirement was imposed on the Arabs living in the Kurdish areas, i.e., they are not required to learn Kurdish.³

Ecological differences are another source of social friction in Iraq. In the absence of strong integrative forces, the traditional rivalry between the urban, the rural, and the bedoin populations has not been substantially reduced. Each manifesting an attitude of superiority toward the other, these groups have practically remained isolated from each other. In part, this attitude is reflected in the educational policies of the Iraqi government, which, being controlled entirely by a small group of

³The Iraqi Kurds are subdivided into three groups: The Badinan, the Suran, and the Baban. The Surans and the Babans speak the Kurdi dialect; the Badinans speak Kemanji. Each of these three groups is further divided into tribes and clans. Harvey H. Smith, et al., *Area Handbook for Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Area Studies, Government Printing Office, 1971), pp. 61-62.

urban elites from Baghdad, Mosul, and provincial towns, has not followed a consistent policy of equal education for all Iraqis.⁴ Although educational facilities since 1958 have expanded at a rapid rate of growth they have benefited urban rather than rural areas of the country. Iraq does not lack the means to build schools, laboratories, and other educational facilities or to pay teachers and instructors to man them. Nor do Iraqi parents and children lack the desire for education. The problem is with staffing small town and village schools because of the fact that most young men after receiving their diplomas refuse to work in rural areas. The same problem arises in the health field; it is virtually impossible to entice physicians and nurses to work outside the main urban centers of the country. Thus, the rural population, which accounts for 70 percent of the total population, is deprived of educational facilities and sufficient health services.⁵

Because of the uneven spread of educational facilities in the country as a whole, the role of education as an integrative force has therefore not been impressive. Traditional attitudes, values, and prejudices still play a significant role in the daily lives of the masses, especially of those living in the provincial towns and rural areas of Iraq. Although education and the mass media have been successful in popularizing the concepts of territorial nationalism and pan-Arabism among the urbanites, these concepts are still of marginal importance in the daily lives of a significant portion of the masses. Furthermore, these concepts have not been successful in eliminating factionalism, confessionism, and other negative social attributes that have prevented the social and political integration of the country.

In the context of domestic politics, the average Iraqi might still identify himself as a Baghdadi, a Najafi, a Takriti, a Kurd, an Arab, a Shia, or a Sunni. Political alliances are often based on such identifications and affiliations, a factor that makes it difficult for Iraq to play a significant role in the Arab movement toward unity. This factionalism has been a major source of instability and weakness in Iraq's domestic

⁴For an excellent analysis of the social, ecological, and educational background of Iraqi leadership between 1948 and 1968, see Phebe Ann Marr, "Iraq's Leadership Dilemma: A Study in Leadership Trends, 1948-1968," *The Middle East Journal*, vol. 24, no. 3 (Summer 1970), pp. 283-301.

⁵*Area Handbook for Iraq*, pp. 115-130.

and foreign policies. While domestically this factionalism has caused civil strife and has taxed the country's scarce human and non-human resources, internationally, it has been responsible for causing military confrontations with two of its non-Arab neighbors--Turkey and Iran, both of whom have had their own Kurdish problems.

Being acutely aware of these domestic schisms and political aspirations of the major factions--Shia, Sunnis, Kurds, Arabs--Iraqi governments have endeavored to reconcile the Sunni Arab demands for union with other Arab states with the Shia Arab and Kurdish demands for maintaining Iraq's separate identity, not to mention the Kurdish demands for regional autonomy.

To satisfy the pro-unity sentiments of Iraqi Sunnites, the Iraqi government entered into a series of political and military agreements, ostensibly to achieve unity with several Arab states. Baghdad, however, being cognizant of the Kurdish and Shia opposition to such a union, was unable to pursue an active unionist policy. This should not be construed to mean that all Iraqi Sunnites are in favor of an Arab union that would destroy Iraqi identity. This point has been a bone of contention among Sunnite elites and masses alike. Pro-unionist groups have often achieved power in Baghdad, but they have never been able to effect a union with Egypt or Syria, the two most promising partners for such a union. Both internal dissension and external circumstances have contributed to frustrate the unionists' political goals.⁶

Interest Groups

The preceding analysis of the Iraqi decision-making environment focused entirely on the confessional, ethnic, and other similar factions whose political and economic aspirations and goals are often competing, if not in contradiction, with each other. With the sole exception of the Kurds, whose separate identity has been recognized by the Provisional Constitution of Iraq and whose interests are being articulated primarily by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), no other group or faction discussed above is officially recognized as an interest group entitled to political activities in

⁶For an excellent analysis of Iraqi domestic politics, see Majid Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*; and for an equally penetrating analysis of intra-Arab rivalries, see Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War, 1958-1967: A Study of Ideology in Politics*, 3rd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1972).

the country.⁷ There exist, however, interest groups that carry out political activities either across all confessional, ethnic, and other similar lines in the country or confine themselves to professional, labor, and students' associations. Although the Provisional Constitution places no serious restrictions in the way of forming political parties, currently, only three political parties function in the country. They are: the Baath, which controls effective political power; the Communist Party of Iraq (pro-Soviet), which holds two cabinet posts but has little real power in the decision-making bodies, such as the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC); and the Kurdistan Democratic Party, which speaks on behalf of the autonomy-minded Barzani group of the Kurds in Iraq.

The Baath

*

In Iraq, the *Baath al-arabi al-ishtiraki* (Arab Socialist Resurrection) movement came into existence in the summer of 1952 when a Shiite student, Fuad al-Rikabi, who had just graduated from the Engineering College, began

⁷ Even the KDP is not recognized as the sole representative of the Kurdish people in Iraq, notwithstanding KDP's claim to the contrary. A large number of Communists are Kurds who express their political views through the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) which, along with the Baath and independents, is a partner in the government-sponsored National Progressive Front. Despite the government's efforts, the KDP refused to join the Front until the March 1970 agreements were implemented. Mukarram Talabani, a member of the Central Committee of the ICP and one of two ministers representing the Communist Party in the Iraqi cabinet, is a Kurd (*The Arab World* [November 20, 1973], p. 12). Talabani (Irrigation) and Amir Abdullah (minister of state without portfolio) were added to the cabinet after Soviet Prime Minister Aleksei Kosygin's first visit to Iraq in April 1972 when a 15-year treaty of friendship and cooperation was signed between Moscow and Baghdad. *An Nahar Arab Report*, vol. 4, no. 21 (21 May 1973), p. 2. After the autonomy plan of 1974, the KDP split into pro-Barzani and anti-Barzani groups, the latter began to call itself the Kurdistan Revolution Party which accepted the terms of the autonomy.

* Because of a hapless dearth of material available in the United States on the Iraqi Baath, no serious effort is made to analyze the ideological components of the party, except to refer occasionally to its general principles and its slogan of Socialism, Revolution and Unity. Even if we had had access to this type of material, it would not have substantially changed our analysis, because ideology does not seem to play a significant role either in the formulation of foreign policy or in dealing with the country's major domestic problems. For an analysis of the National Baath's ideology, see Kamel S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966).

to create secret cells of members and sympathizers in the country.⁸ Gradually, the Baath began to attract adherents from a variety of social, economic, and professional groups, including the armed forces of the country. Realizing the significant role the armed forces could play in capturing power, the Baath proselyted a number of army officers who, along with other "nationalist" and "progressive" officers, took part in the anti-monarchist coup of July 1958.

Ideological and personality problems within the Baath and the party's conflict with President Qassem, who began to monopolize power, made the Baathist-Qassemite break inevitable. As the regime became more tolerant of Communist activities, the Baathists became less friendly with Qassem. Having failed to outmaneuver Qassem through internal and external intrigues, the Baathists tried in October 1959, to assassinate him, but failed.⁹

⁸Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, p. 115. In the post-July 1958 coup period Faud Rikabi was appointed Minister of Development by the Baath National Command (all-Arab). Rikabi's participation in the Qassem government was considered to be "strictly personal." Although at the time Rikabi was secretary-general of the Regional Command, there were serious differences of opinion between him and the National Command. One of the differences revolved around the conflict between the Baathists and the nationalist officers. Rikabi believed that the Baath should not discriminate against the nationalist officers, because fundamentally there were hardly any political differences between them and the Baathist. He pointed out that as nationalist officers, their credentials were far superior than those of the Communists with whom the Baath had previously cooperated. Furthermore, Rikabi believed that regardless of differences between Nasser and the party on the issue of liberty for example, the Baath should not insist on a separate existence if it served the cause of Arab union. In addition, Rikabi differed from the majority of his party on the use of violence in resolving political differences. It is alleged that he participated, without permission from, or knowledge of, the Regional and National Commands, in the assassination attempt on Qassem in September 1959. Because of these differences, Rikabi was expelled from the party in August 1961. Kamel S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party* [Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1966]. pp. 54-55). On May 20, 1969, the Baathist regime ordered the arrest of Rikabi and confiscation of his property, along with scores of other Iraqi citizens, former ministers, bureaucrats, and businessmen. He was sentenced to three years imprisonment and while serving the last two weeks of his incarceration, Rikabi was stabbed and killed by an "unknown" assailant. FBIS (December 16, 1971), p. C2. Eliezer Beerli, *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society* (New York: Praeger, 1970). p. 177.

⁹Beerli, *Army Officers*, p. 188; Phebe Marr, "How Baathists Keep Lid on Turbulence in Iraq," *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 8, 1971, p. 5, states that Saddam Hussain Takriti participated in the attempted assassination of Qassem; see also *An Nahar*, vol. 5, no. 44; and Lorenzo Kent Kimball, *The Changing Pattern of Political Power in Iraq* (New York: Robert Speller, 1972), p. 98.

After this incident, many known Baathists had to live in temporary exile until the party once again came into power in 1963. Before this, however, the party had to enlarge its contacts both with military and non-military groups. In 1961, the Baath resumed its covert activities under Ali Salih al-Saadi, who was entrusted with the leadership of the party. During the next two years, the Baath once again endeavored to win adherents among military officers. In February 1963, a group of Baathist and Nasserite officers overthrew the Nasseem regime and established a coalition government under Abdul Salam Aref. Being a highly devout Muslim and a pragmatist, Aref could not continue his relations with an ideologically oriented party whose leadership was disunited and ill-prepared for making day-to-day decisions. On its part, the Baath was making preparations to oust Aref whom they distrusted because of his religious and political views.

During this period, the Baath leaders were divided into three groups. The right wing group consisted of Talib Shabib; Hazim Jawad, Minister of State; Hardan Takriti, Commander of the Air Force; Tahir Yahya, chief of the General Staff; and Abd al-Sattar Abd al-Latif, Minister of Communications. This group advocated cooperation with other nationalist elements, especially those in the army. Furthermore, they advocated the postponement of the implementation of radical reforms, especially the imposition of socialism in the country. On this point at least, this group could support its opposition to socialism by referring to Michel Aflaq's statement that declared that the Baath should not try to carry out socialism until Arab union was achieved. In other words, the principle of "socialism in one country" was not to be pursued.

The left wing group was composed of Ali Salih al-Saadi, Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior (later Minister of Guidance), Muhsin al-Shaykh Radi, Hamdi Abd al-Majid, Hami al-Fukayki, and Abu Talib al-Hashimi. This group, composed mainly of civilians, was vehement in its insistence on socialism. They argued that socialism would accelerate the process of distribution of wealth to the masses whose firm support was essential for maintaining political control of the country. The leftist group was opposed to cooperation with the nationalist (Nasserite) army officers, especially those who rejected Baathist ideology.

Between these two extremes was a moderate group led by Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, prime minister and later vice president, and Salih Mahdi Ammash,

minister of defense. Ammash tried to reconcile the differences between the two extreme groups but failed.

This internal rift in the Baath provided an opening for Aref to weaken the opposition to his regime. Aref, who was conservative in his political and economic outlook, favored the moderate and the rightist wings of the Baath, though he himself never joined the party. At a crucial time in November 1963, he supported these two groups in their effort to oust al-Saadi from the party leadership. After his ouster, al-Saadi was arrested and exiled to Spain. At this juncture, the Iraqi Baath made an important change in the traditional ratio of military-civilian membership in its regional command. Unlike the previous tradition of keeping the civilians in the majority, the November 1963 session of the Baath elected an equal number of civilian and military members to the Regional Command.¹⁰

In the meantime, the March 1963 coup in Damascus brought the Baath to power in Syria. There, the military wing of the party consolidated its power at the expense of the civilian group. As a result of this, the Iraqi moderate and rightist factions did not receive any support from the Syrian Baathists who disagreed with Bakr and Ammash on cooperation with the nationalist army officers. The Syrian Baathist believed in an "ideological army" which would defend not only the country's territorial integrity but also the political and social values imposed by the party. Because of the disagreements between the Syrian and Iraqi Baathist, the position of the Iraqi Baathist, vis-a-vis the nationalist officers, was thus further weakened. Consequently, Aref was able to expell the Baathists without any serious challenge to his authority.¹¹

After an hiatus of nearly five years, the Baath reemerged as the dominant political force in Iraq. During this period, it analyzed and reflected on the causes of its previous failure to maintain power in the country. It seems that the Baath learned at least two important lessons

¹⁰Beerli, *Army Officers*, pp. 198-200; Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 202, 209-210.

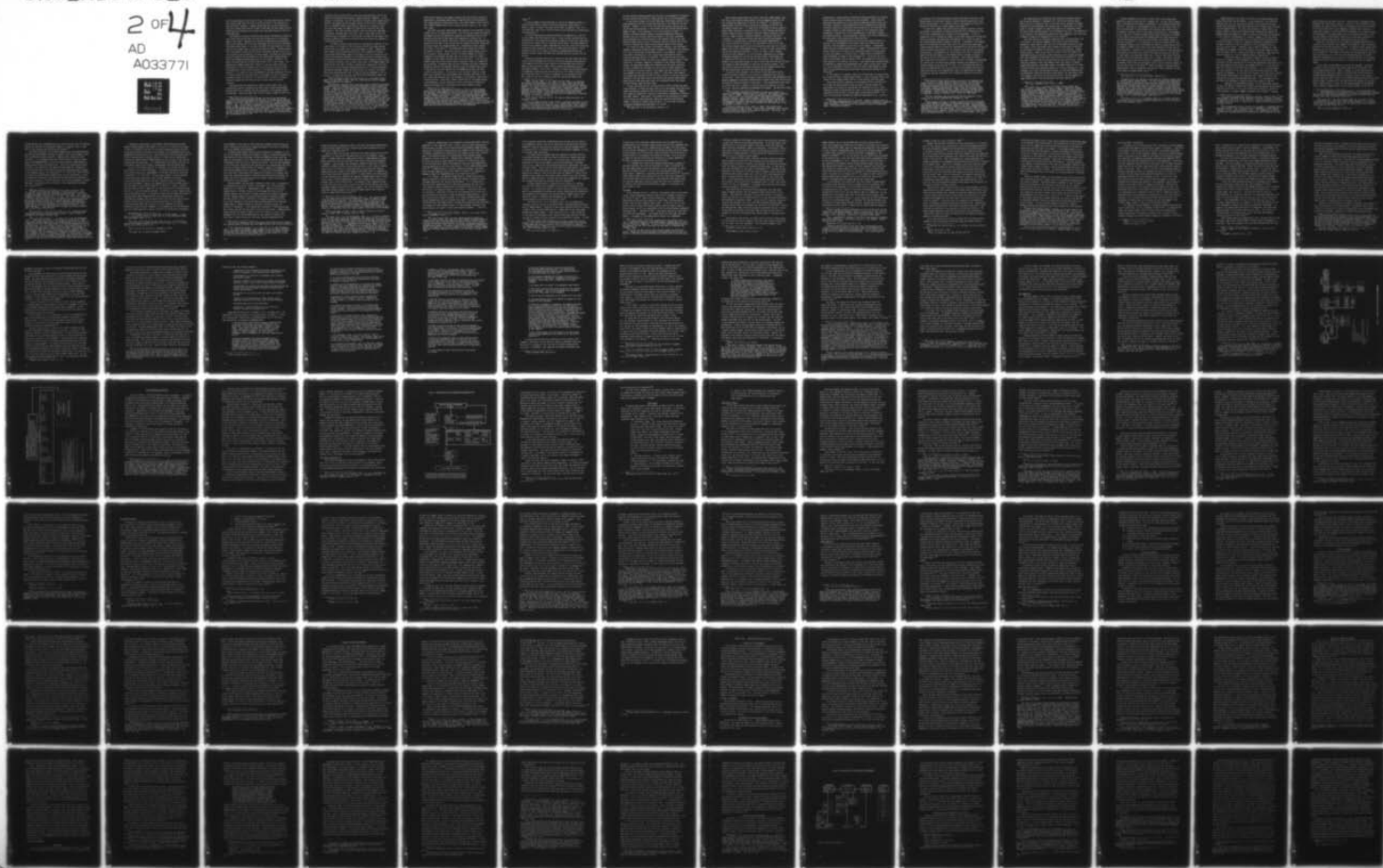
¹¹While the al-Saadi group was being weakened by a coalition of the moderate and rightist groups of the Baath in Iraq, the Sixth National (all-Arab) Congress of the Baath, convened in Damascus from September 5 to September 23 and approved the resolutions and plans introduced by the extreme wing of the party. Beerli, *Army Officers*, p.199.

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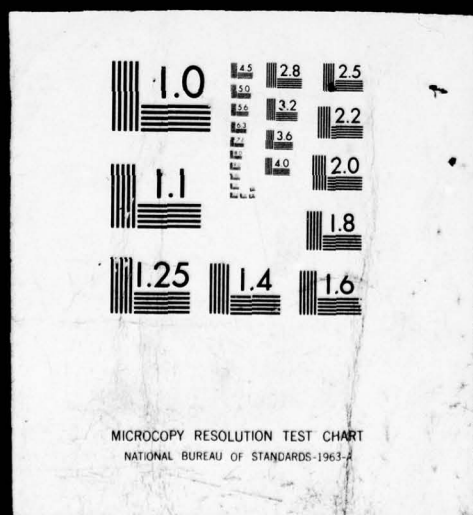


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from its experiences in Syria and in Iraq. The Iraqi Baath came to realize that sharing power with any group or political party is not conducive to their political interests. Another lesson they seem to have learned was that the military should not be allowed to dominate the party whose civilian leadership must maintain strict control over the armed forces and over the party apparatus.

That these two cardinal principles have heavily influenced its decisions can be seen from the policies the Baath has followed since it recaptured power in July 1968. Although it has appointed Communists and non-Baathist Kurds to the cabinet and to the vice presidency (the current vice president, Taha Muhyi ad-Din Maaruf, is a Kurd), the Baath has been unwilling to share power at the highest level of the decision-making process. Despite pressure from its Communist allies and from the pro-government faction of the Kurds, not to speak of the nationalists and other groups, the Baath has persistently refused to appoint any non-Baathist to the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), the highest decision-making body in the country. Similarly, the Baath has monopolized the political activities in the armed forces. The Baathists are adamant about their refusal to allow any other political organization or group to engage in any form of political activity within the armed forces, which are the mainstay of the Baathist control of the country.¹² As a result of this, the Baathists have been successful not only in providing stability and continuity to the regime but also in showing a remarkable stamina in surviving, as ruling elites, in spite of internal dissension between the military and the civilian wings of the party hierarchy.

These two wings have disagreed on several issues facing Iraq: the Kurdish-Arab conflict, relations with Arab states, economic development, conflict with Iran, relations with the superpowers, and problems related to Palestine. Since July 1968, this rift has caused a number of political

¹²The Provision Constitution provided that the RCC was the highest authority in the state consisting not more than 12 persons chosen from the members of the Iraqi leadership of the Baath Party--i.e., from the Regional Command. *Who's Who in the Arab World 1974-1975* Beirut: Publitec Publications (n.d.), p. 433. In July 1973, an amendment to the constitution gave more powers to Ahmad Hassan Bakr but did not change materially the central role of the RCC and the Baath monopoly over the council. It was not until November 21, 1971, that the RCC officially banned all political activity and organizations inside the Iraqi armed forces, with the exception of the Baath Party. FBIS (22 November 1971), p. C1.

casualties within the RCC and its auxiliary governing bodies such as the cabinet and the Baath Party Regional Command (Regional Command). In this process of elimination, the civilian wing of the party, under Saddam Hussain Takriti, has emerged as the strongest faction in the ruling institutions. This is a moderate center group that has removed by a variety of legal and extra-legal means the opposition posed by the right and left wing extremists. This does not mean, however, that this group has foresaken the Baathist ideology, goals, and aims. What it does mean is that this moderate group is pragmatic in its relations with most foreign powers, the possible exception being Syria with which the Iraqi Baaths are engaged in an ideological battle.

To obtain a better understanding of the emergent leadership of the Iraqi Baath, it is essential that we discuss briefly the stages through which the RCC has passed since its establishment in 1968. Although the Aref* regime was overthrown essentially by two non-Baathist officers-- Colonel Abdul Razak Nayef, deputy intelligence chief and a Nasserite; and Colonel Ibrahim Daoud, Commander of the Republican Guard--the Baath Party had prepared the ground by spreading dissatisfaction among the army officers. The old party stalwarts, such as Ahmad Hassan Bakr, Salih Mehdi Ammash, and Hardan Takriti and their followers, extended full cooperation to the conspirators for which they were awarded key positions in the new government. Bakr became president, Ammash was made minister of interior, and Hardan Takriti was appointed army chief of staff and acting commander of the air force.¹³ The day after the coup, the Middle East News Agency (MENA, the

* Abdul al-Rahman, brother of Abdul Salam Aref. After Abdul Salam's death in a helicopter in April 1966, his older brother, Abdul al-Rahman, became president of the republic.

¹³ The Nasserite co-conspirator, Abdul Razak Nayef, headed the government as premier and his colleague, Colonel Ibrahim Daoud, held the ministry of defense. Daoud was also appointed deputy commander-in-chief of the armed forces. In addition to Salih Mehdi Ammash, there were seven more Baathists in the cabinet: Dr. Ahmad Abd as-Sattar al-Juwari who, since 1968 has been minister of education; Anwar Abd al-Qadir al-Hadithi who still holds the portfolio of labor and social affairs; and Dr. Issat Mustafa, who, in addition to being minister of health since 1968, has become a member of the all powerful RCC and the Regional Command Council. Other Baathist ministers were: Khalid Makki al-Hashimi, industry; Dr. Ghaile Mawlud Mukhlis, minicipal and village affairs,; Diyab al-Alqawi, youth care; and Kazim Mualla, minister of state without portfolio. *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)*, 19 July 1968, p. C1, *Who's Who in the Arab World 1971-1972*, pp. 384-85; and *Europa, The Middle East and North Africa 1968-69*; *Europa, 1969-70*; *Europa, 1971-72*; *Europa 1972-73*; *Europa, 1973-74*; and *Europa 1974-75*. FBIS (22 July 1968), pp. C2-C7.

semi-official Egyptian news agency) reported that the military junta had established a five-member Revolutionary Command Council that consisted of four known Baathists--Ahmad Hassan Bakr, Salih Mehdi Ammash, Hardan Takriti, Maj. Saadoun Ghaydan Takriti--and a rather unknown figure, Lt. Col. Kamel Jamil Abbud.

Soon after this report appeared, the MENA withdrew it and replaced it with another list of six names from the RCC. Not only was the council enlarged by one member but also the membership announced was completely new, the only exception being that of Bakr whose name reappeared on the new list. It was obvious that an internal struggle for power was being waged between the Baathists led by Bakr on the one hand and the extreme Nasserites represented by Colonel Nayef, and moderate Nasserites, represented by Major General Naji Talib, on the other.¹⁴ The second MENA report named the following as members of the RCC: Rajab Abd al-Majid, former deputy premier; Abd al-Aziz al-Uqayli, former defense minister, Brigadier General Said Salibi, Commander of the Baghdad garrison, then out of the country for medical treatment; Colonel Nayef; Colonel Daoud; and Hassan Bakr. It is not clear whether these conflicting reports merely reflected a state of instability and uncertainty in Baghdad after the coup or whether this was a deliberate attempt on the part of competing interest groups who spread these rumors in the hope of eliciting support from the undecided military and other factions in the country. In any case, it was not until July 23, a week after the revolution, that the Baghdad Radio broadcast the names of the RCC, which, the broadcast said, was composed of six members: they were all military officers. Four--Bakr, Ammash, Hardan Takriti, and Hammad Shihab--were Baathists, and the remaining two were "nationalist" (Nayef was a Nasserite and Daoud was a pan-Arabist with strong Islamic and Arab

¹⁴ FBIS (19 July 1968) quoting *Al-Hayah*, p. C-8. Lt. Colonel Saadoun Ghaydan Takriti was promoted to the rank of brigadier and was appointed the commander of the republican guard, replacing Lt. Col. Ibrahim Daoud who was promoted to the rank of Lt. General and appointed deputy commander in chief of the armed forces. It should be noted that because of the republican guard's location in Baghdad and its role in the protection of the Presidential Palace, the position of the commander of the republican guard is considered more important than deputy commander-in-chief. This shows that the Baathists were from the beginning following a systematic approach of seizing power and eliminating the non-Baathists from the government.

ideals.¹⁵

Of the 26 member cabinet appointed on July 18 and headed by Nayef, six were military officers (three of whom were Baathists: Khalid Makki al-Hashimi, Diyab al-Alqawi, and Anwar Abd al-Qadir al-Hadithi); four, civilian Baathists; four, Kurds; and the remaining were nationalists, technocrats, and bureaucrats.¹⁶

From the distribution of cabinet portfolios and membership in the RCC, it was evident that the Baathists were in a much stronger position than the nationalists or the Nasserites who seemed to have had no political experience and hardly any support from an organized popular group. The Baath-Nasserite coalition was created by sheer expediency and could not survive the pressures created by mutual suspicions and lack of common goals and ideals. Within two-weeks of the July 17 coup, the Baathist outmaneuvered the two non-Baathist officers--Nayef and Daoud--and expelled them from the RCC and the cabinet.

Although the November 1963 special session of the Iraqi Baath had established a parity¹⁷ between the civilian and military members of the Regional High Command, the civilian group stayed in the background during the two weeks of post-revolution (1968) struggle between the Baathists and the non-Baathist members of the junta. However, no sooner did the Baath succeed in monopolizing power than the civilian-military rift within the party began to manifest itself in the form of demands for the expansion of the RCC, purges of the rival factions, intensified ideological debate (the

¹⁵FBIS, (24 July 1968), p. C1; FBIS (July 22, 1968), p. C5 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* (August 17-24, 1968), p. 22869, states that the RCC was composed of seven members, the additional member being Colonel Saadoun Ghaydan. In view of the official broadcast and of proclamation no. 23 (both dated July 23, 1968), *Keesing's* statement seems inaccurate. Saadoun Ghaydan, commander of the Baghdad garrison, was added after Nayef and Daoud were expelled from the council. This addition brought and kept that total membership to five until November 1969 when the RCC membership was expanded to fifteen. For details, see below.

¹⁶FBIS (22 July 1968) pp. C2--C7. For names of these ministers, see footnote 13 above.

¹⁷While no further mention of this parity's continuous existence has been called to the attention of the author, it is assumed that the Baath regional command did not change this equation between 1963 and 1968. This assumption is based on the premise that since the Baath needed the military to seize power, the party would have avoided conflict on this issue.

civilian faction's weapon against the military), and statements on strategic politics (the military faction's weapon against the civilian counterpart).

In the initial stages of the July 1968 coup, the military faction of the Baath monopolized the RCC and held key positions in the Nayef and the Bakr cabinets. However, in view of the fact that the military faction did not control the party apparatus, it was evident that the civilian faction would demand an equal, if not dominant, role in the hierarchy of power. In addition, the Baath National Command expressed apprehension about the dominant role the military faction was playing in the Iraqi government. After expressing its initial approval of the Baathist coup in Iraq, the National Command began to warn its adherents against allowing the military faction to dominate the highest decision-making bodies in the country.

As a result of these internal and external pressures, the Iraqi Baath adopted a three-point Aflaqian program designed to reduce the civil-military rift, and to consolidate the Baathist control of the country. The civil force behind the adoption of this program was Saddam Hussain Takriti, assistant secretary general of the Baath. This program, which had been enunciated by Michel Aflaq long before the Baathists came to power in 1968, called for: a national, democratic settlement of the Kurdish problem; a formula for cooperation between the Communists and the Baath internally as well as between the government and the socialist states abroad; and the avoidance of military control of the party with the creation of a balance between military and civilian groups.¹⁸ Since ethnic and ideological schisms were two major factors in Iraqi disunity, it was not surprising therefore, that the Baath Party chief decided that healing these schisms would be two of the three major goals to be achieved by the Iraqi Baath. We shall discuss these two goals later.

To focus once again on the civilian-military conflict within the Baath Party hierarchy, it should be noted that not all the changes that took place within the RCC were induced by the civilian-military struggle. Members were added and dropped for a variety of ideological, personality, political, and other reasons. Occasionally, the reason for the expulsion of a member of the RCC was not even announced, unless the expulsion signified the member's disgrace and removal from the party. In such cases, elaborate accusatory statements were published in the press.

¹⁸ *An Nahar* vol. I, no. 20 (20 July 1970) pp. 1-2.

After further consolidating his hold on the party, Saddam Hussein, with the help of the Regional Command Council and the moderate faction of the RCC, expanded the membership of the RCC to fifteen.¹⁹ In addition to Saddam Hussein Takriti, who was elected vice president of the RCC, the new members elected were: Dr. Abdul Karim al-Shaikhaly (foreign minister), Shafiq Kamali (minister of youth affairs), Dr. Izzat Mustafa (minister of health), Abdullah Saloum al-Samarrai, Abdullah Khalek al-Samarrai, Saleh omer Ali, Izzat al-Doury, Murtadha al-Hadithi, and Captain Taha Yasin al-Jazrawi.²⁰ By enlarging the RCC with mainly non-military members, the civilians in the Baath took an important step toward subordinating the military faction of the party. As constituted in the fall of 1969, the military faction could not count for support on more than six or seven members out of the fifteen-member council. At least in form, the military faction was reduced to a minority. We say "at least in form" because the key military commanders, in case of serious ideological or strategic differences between the civilian and military groups, could always try to impose the military's will on the civilian faction. This would not, however, be an easy task because of lack of unity among the military officers and because of their dependence on the party for popular support. Only the civilian faction of the Baath could provide this support because the military faction had practically no contact with the public.

In spite of this advantage, the civilian faction for awhile did not manifest complete confidence in its ability to subordinate the military to the party. During the early months of the revolution, both the National and Regional Commands of the Baath expressed public concern about the possibility of the military regaining control of the country. Their apprehensions were based on the fact that only a handful of officers could be counted on as "true believers" who were ideologically committed to the Baath. The rest were either

¹⁹This expansion, announced on November 10, 1969, was preceded by a meeting of the Regional Command Council in Baghdad. See *Keesing's* (February 14-21, 1970) p. 23823. In our study of the Iraqi Baath, we have been puzzled by the fact that no effort seems to have been made to keep this strength constant. Between 1969 and 1974, eight members of the RCC were fired and one was killed. None of these vacancies, however, was filled. The membership strength of the council progressively went down and, at the end of 1974, it stood at six.

²⁰*Keesing's* (February 14-21, 1970), p. 23828. This source gives Captain al-Jazrawi's name as Taher. Based on our information from a variety of other sources, we have given his name as Taha Yasin. See *Europa, The Middle East and North Africa 1970-71*.

opportunists or young Unionists (Nasserites) who were waiting for an appropriate occasion to oust the Baath from the government. That is why the Nasserites had refused to join the Baathist-sponsored national front, despite Bakr's efforts to seek cooperation with all segments of the society. A serious difficulty in convincing the non-Baathist to join the front lay in Baath's refusal to share effective power with its competitors whose cooperation it sought only in the implementation of the party's domestic and foreign policies. The non-Baathists, however, were given no opportunity to participate in the formulation of these policies.

Although the enlargement of the RCC placed the military faction in a minority, this arrangement did not reduce either the civilian-military tension or the disagreements among the civilian members. Consequently, these divisions provided Saddam Hussein a number of opportunities to manipulate the RCC so as to allow him to concentrate power in his own hands. By using the method of "divide and rule," Saddam Hussein eliminated all major contenders for power in the omnipotent RCC. During the last five years (from November 1969 to November 1974), the membership of the RCC has been reduced to its original size of six. Some members were removed because of personality clashes and disagreements over tactics; others were "voted out" due to ideological conflicts, and still others were offered as scapegoats for collective decisions that became ideologically embarrassing to the party.²¹

Of the remaining six members, three are military--Bakr and Taha Jazrawi are retired officers, Saadoun Ghidan Takriti is still an active officer--and three civilian--Saddam Hussein Takriti, Izzat Mustafa, and Izzat Doury.

One of the earliest casualties of the internal strife in the RCC was Salah Omer Ali whose dismissal from the council and the cabinet (he was minister of culture and information) was announced on July 2, 1970. Although no official explanation was given, it is safe to assume that Ali's dismissal did not reflect a serious power struggle within the RCC. The date of his dismissal suggests one plausible explanation of it. Prior to

²¹ Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 207-208. Khadduri maintains that the "lack of a deeper understanding of basic principles (of socialism), especially their relevance to Iraq, was one of the important causes of disagreement" among the Baathist leadership.

his dismissal, the Iraqi government had come under severe criticism in the foreign press for executing a number of spies allegedly working for Israel and the United States. It is possible that Ali was accused of failure to counter the foreign press attacks against the regime.²²

If Omer Ali's removal from the RCC did not cause a political storm in the country, the dismissal of General Hardan Takriti did rekindle the fear of military intervention and a takeover of the government. It was in recognition of his strength and support in the armed forces that the decision about his dismissal was taken while the General was in Spain en route to the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Furthermore, the announcement of the dismissal was kept secret until the regime could take precautionary measures against any possible counteraction by pro-Takriti officers.²³ There are several explanations for his dismissal from the RCC, the Cabinet, and the party. One hypothesis is that because of his role in ousting the Baath from the Aref regime in 1963, Hardan Takriti had been a suspect in the eyes of the civilian faction of the Baath. This suspicion seems to have turned into a conviction as a result of Takriti's efforts to consolidate his control over the armed forces through transfers and promotions of his trusted friends to key positions.²⁴ Thus, it is postulated that the dismissal of Hardan Takriti was no surprise and that the Baath hierarchy had simply been waiting for an appropriate "cause" and opportunity to remove the general, who was considered to be a potential threat to the civilian group.

²²The Baathist regime carried out mass arrests of its opponents and alleged spies in the later months of 1968 and in 1969. The first wave of arrests occurred in October 1968 when over 80 officers were arrested following an attempted military coup led by General Abdul Hadi al-Rawi. In mid-1969, further announcements of alleged plots and espionage caused the arrests of hundreds more officers, former ministers, and other political opponents. During that year 98 persons were executed for conspiracy or espionage. *Keesing's* (February 14-21, 1970), pp. 23827-23830.

²³The RCC reportedly made the dismissal decision sometime in early October but it was not announced until October 15, 1970.

²⁴Even though he had been a "suspect", Hardan Takriti was reinstated in the party because his support was considered essential for a successful coup against the Aref (Abdul Rehman) regime in July 1968. Between November 1963 and March 1964, Takriti held the posts of Minister of Defense and Deputy Commander in Chief of the armed forces. After his dismissal from the government, Hardan Takriti underwent "Confession and Self-Criticism" which restored him to the Baath hierarchy. *An Nahar*, Vol I, no.33(19 October, 1970), p.2.

This opportunity was provided by the Palestinian-Jordanian conflict that violently exploded in September 1970. During this period, Hardan Takriti was on an inspection tour of the Iraqi forces stationed in Jordan. Although the Iraqi government had declared that it would order its 12,000 troops in Jordan to support the guerrillas against the Jordanian troops, the Iraqi forces remained neutral in the Jordanian civil war. This neutrality, it was reported, was imposed by Hardan Takriti who remained at the Iraqi base at Mafraq to ensure the implementation of his orders.²⁵

The Iraqi failure to intervene intensified the civilian-military rift in the Baath. The National Command of the party led by Michel Aflaq expressed a "deep concern" about the lack of ideological conviction among the leaders of the Iraqi Baath, which claimed to have based its policies on the Baathist principles of revolution, unity, and socialism. Saddam Hussein Takriti, leader of the civilian faction of the Iraqi Baath, was reportedly anxious to maintain cordial relations with the National Command, which had threatened to dissociate itself from the Iraqi Baath if it did not purge itself of those who deviated from the party principles. Michel Aflaq was reported to have told Saddam Hussein that unless it removed Hardan Abdel Ghaffar, Saleh Mehdi Ammash, and Hammad Shehab (all of these military officers were reportedly opposed to military intervention in the Jordanian civil war) from the governing body, the National Command would be convened for taking disciplinary action against the Iraqi Baath. Under this pressure, and criticism from the Palestinians, the RCC decided to expel Hardan Takriti from the government and party apparatus.²⁶

²⁵ *Keesing's* (November 14-21, 1970), p. 24292.

²⁶ *An Nahar*, Vol I., nos 33,34 (19 October and 26 October 1970) pp. 1-2 and p. 2, respectively. While in Kuwait in March 1971, Hardan Takriti was assassinated by two "unknown" gunman. There were unsubstantiated stories that suggested three possible causes of his murder: (1) that he was involved in a counter coup against Saddam Hussein who had him murdered; (2) that he was assassinated by members of a Palestinian guerrilla group for his role in the Jordanian civil war; (3) that his murder was carried out by the followers of the exiled Iranian General Teymour Bakhtiyar in whose assassination in Iraq Hardan Takriti was allegedly involved. *An Nahar*, Vol. 2, nos. 15 and 41 (12 April and 11 October 1971), pp. 3 and 1-2, respectively. See also, Phebe Marr, "How Baathists Keep Lid on Turbulence in Iraq," *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 8, 1971, p. 5.

Another hypothesis of the Takriti affair posits that Hardan Abdul Ghaffar was merely singled out as a scapegoat for the RCC, which probably made a unanimous decision against intervention in the Jordanian-Palestinian conflict. According to a knowledgeable source, the Iraqi forces could not have intervened even if they wanted to do so because they had been sent to Jordan as "political exiles" and without any ammunition. The commander of the Iraqi force in Jordan, Colonel Hassan Naqib, reportedly told members of the Palestine resistance Central Committee that the Iraqi forces were "exiled here because the loyalty of the officers to the Baath regime" in Iraq was uncertain.²⁷ It is interesting to note that neither the RCC nor the Regional Command of the Iraqi Baath ever publicly accused Hardan Takriti of disobeying orders of the council which had "promised" military help to the Palestinians. Therefore, it is our conclusion that the Iraqi government, while paying lip service to the Palestinian cause and while inciting them to fight against the Jordanian forces, was in reality unwilling to provide material aid to the Palestinian guerrillas in Jordan. We further conclude that Saddam Hussein used this occasion to strengthen the civilian faction by removing from the RCC and the Cabinet one of the most forceful leaders of the military faction of the Baath.²⁸ After the removal of Hardan Takriti, Saddam Hussein had to contend with only two more "heirs apparent" to Bakr--Saleh Ammash and Hammad Shehab Takriti.²⁹

²⁷*An Nahar*, Vol. I, no.34 (26 October, 1970) pp. 2-3.

²⁸Saddam Hussein was reported to have made the following charges against his distant cousin, Hardan Takriti: (1) that the general was responsible for the execution of 26 young officers who were recalled from Jordan where they had been stationed with the Iraqi force (no reasons for the execution were given); (2) that Hardan Takriti had made contacts with the Nasserite officers, with a view to using them against the Baathist regime (one source suggested that Hardan Takriti was expelled from the RCC and the Cabinet because of his anti-Egyptian attitude! *Area Handbook on Iraq*, p. XVI); and that the General had received commission from oil companies operating in the country. *An Nahar*, Vol. I, no.34 (26 October, 1970), pp. 2-3.

²⁹*An Nahar*, Vol 2, no. 5 (1 February, 1971), p. 1, reports that Bakr had written a will in which he appointed Saddam Hussein as his successor in case of the president's death.

Saddam Hussein was not alone in his efforts to eliminate Ammash and Shehab from the RCC and the Cabinet. He was supported in this by Michel Aflaq who had let it be known that he wanted to see these two officers removed from responsible positions before he would "resume normal relations" with the Baghdad regime. For Aflaq, the dismissal of Hardan Takriti was merely a gesture to placate the Baath National Command whose support the Baghdad regime had sought as a means of acquiring legitimacy and acceptance by the so-called "revolutionary" or "radical" regimes in the Arab world.

It should be recalled that one of the three Aflaqian principles had called for finding a formula for cooperation between the Communists and the Baath internally as well as between the Iraqi government and the socialist states abroad. Internally, and as early as December 31, 1969, the Baathists succeeded in obtaining support of the Iraqi Communist Party (the pro-Soviet faction, known as the Central Committee), which agreed to join the Cabinet as a sign of Communist-Baathist cooperation.³⁰

Externally, however, the Baathist regime in Iraq was finding it difficult to reconcile its differences on the issue of the Rogers peace plan which Iraq had rejected but which had been supported by the Soviet Union. The Iraqi opposition was based on the argument that the U.S. plan did not deal with the heart of the Arab-Israeli problem -- i.e., the Palestinians. The Iraqi rejection of the plan caused Iraqi-Soviet tension and an Iraqi-Egyptian estrangement. It was within the context of the Iraqi-Soviet tension that General Saleh Ammash, vice president, and a member of the RCC, was removed from his party and government positions. Also dismissed with him was Abdul Karim Shaikhaly, foreign minister and a member of the RCC.

Reporting the governmental changes in Iraq, John Cooley pointed out that the removal of Ammash and Shaikhaly had some bearing on Iraqi-Soviet relations, which were not as close as the June 17th protocol, April 8th trade agreement, or August 19th oil agreement would indicate.³¹ However,

³⁰Aziz Sharif was appointed, Minister of Justice, a post he held for less than two years; thereafter he was appointed a Minister of State; at the end of July 1974, he was still in this position. *Keesing's* (February 14-21, 1970), p. 23828; and *Europa* 1970-71, *Europa* 1971-72, *Europa* 1972-73, *Europa* 1973-74, and *Europa* 1974-75.

³¹The announcement of their dismissal was broadcast by Baghdad Radio on September 28, 1971. See *The Washington Post*, September 29, 1971, and *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 2, 1971, p. 14. Ammash was assigned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Shaikhaly was sent to New York as Iraq's

neither Cooley nor any other writer has explained the link between these dismissals and Iraqi-Soviet relations. From the little information we have on Ammash, we surmise that the Iraqi vice president lost out on two counts: first, he was known for his anti-Communist sentiments and, second, he, along with a number of civilian and military leaders, was in favor of Egyptian acceptance of the Rogers peace plan. This, having placed him, on the one hand, against the pro-Soviet faction and, on the other, against the "rejection group" within the RCC, caused him to lose his position.

Since the Iraqi efforts at this stage were directed toward improving relations with the Soviet Union, Ammash's anti-Communist views were used to eliminate him from the hierarchy of power. Of course, Aflaq's opposition to Ammash was also a contributing factor to his dismissal from the RCC and vice presidency.³² The removal of Shaikhaly was not connected as much with Iraqi foreign policy as it was with the internal dissension in the RCC. Shaikhaly, considered to be a close ally of Saddam Hussein, was reportedly removed from the RCC and the Cabinet as a *quid pro quo* for the removal of Ammash.

In mid-1972, two more members of the RCC were dropped. Shafiq Abd al-Jabbar al-Kamali and Abdullah Salouma Samarraï were "demoted" from their respective positions. Kamali, a member of the RCC and minister of information was appointed a member of the Educational Affairs Bureau at the Revolutionary Command Council; and Samarraï, after a short jobless period, became minister of state in the Cabinet appointed after the July 1973 abortive coup. In January 1974, the Eighth National Congress of the Iraqi Baath elected Kamali as one of the five reserve members of the National (Iraqi) Regional Command Council, which provides members for the RCC.³³

³¹ (contd) Ambassador to the United Nations. FBIS (29 September 1971) p. C-1. MENA reported that the dismissal of Ammash and Shaikhaly was preceded by a sharp critical attack by Saddam Hussein on their attitude toward the Kurdish issue. FBIS (13 October, 1974), p.C-1.

³² *An Nahar*, Vol I, no. 24 (17 August 1970), pp. 2-3; John K. Cooley, "Leadership Shuffle in Iraq Signals New Internal Ferment," *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 2, 1971, p. 14; On Ammash being an anti-Communist, see *An Nahar* (9 July, 1973), pp. 2-3.

³³ *The Arab World* (January 14, 1974), p.5.

Murtada Hadithi, who succeeded Shaikly as foreign minister, did not nominate himself for election to the Regional Command. Six months later, in June 1974, he was removed from the RCC and the Cabinet.³⁴

The latest casualties of the power struggle within the Baath hierarchy were General Hamad Shehab, minister of defense, and a senior member of the RCC; and Abdullah Khalek al-Samarrai, reputed to be the party's chief ideologist. In an attempted coup led by the director of security, Nazem Kazzar, and Mohammed Fadel, also of the Security Bureau, Hamad Shehab was captured and killed by the conspirators. During the investigations which followed, it was discovered that Abdullah Khalek Samarrai, although not an active participant in the abortive coup, had nevertheless been informed of the impending coup by the conspirators.³⁵ In view of the close relationship that had existed between Saddam Hussein and the conspirators, it was contended that the abortive coup had been directed against the remnants of the military faction in the RCC and that if the coup had succeeded, "it would have been a logical conclusion of Hussein's drive toward party supremacy and isolationism."³⁶

³⁴Murtada al-Hadithi was relieved of his duties on June 23, 1974. The same day, he was appointed ambassador to the Soviet Union. He was succeeded by Shazel Jasem Taqa as foreign minister of Iraq. Taqa is not a member of the RCC. *An Nahar*, Vol 5, no. 26 (1 July 1974), n.p. Commenting on Hadithi's dismissal from the RCC, *An Nahar*, Vol. 5, no. 27 (8 July 1974), pp.3-4, said that the removal of the foreign minister indicated that Iraq was perhaps looking for openings in certain completely new directions: Reconciliation with the Arab world, and an opening on the international plane might be behind the replacement of the foreign minister ... by a career diplomat, ... even though internal intrigue has certainly played a part in the foreign minister's fall.

³⁵*An Nahar*, Vol 4, no.30 (23 July, 1973), pp. 2-3. Both Nazem Kazzar and Mohammed Fadel were executed; Khalek Samarrai's death sentence was commuted at the request of Michel Aflaq.

³⁶"The Iraqi Ba'ath Party"- I, *An Nahar*, Vol. 5, no. 44 (4 November, 1974). A year before the coup, *An Nahar* noted the existence of a close relationship between Saddam Hussein and Mohammed Fadel who, at the time, was a member of the Public Relations Office in the Regional Command Council of the Baath Party. *An Nahar* further pointed out that Saddam Hussein, with the help of the National Security Agency, which he headed, had succeeded in liquidating all opposition in the Baath and the army. However, the July 1973 attempted coup, the large-scale transfers and appointments within the army in August, the civil disturbances in Baghdad in October which constrained the government to impose a curfew in the capital city, and a mutiny in September 1974 in which the air force Commander, Brigadier Husain Hayawi Takriti, and commanders of the 8th division and the republican guards participated, show that

Although the conspirators killed General Hammad Shehab and wounded General Saadoun Ghaydan, both members of the RCC, it is difficult to accept *An Nahar's* unifactorial analysis of the event, especially when we are told by the same periodical that Kazzar was opposed to the Government's policy of appeasement of the Kurds and to a closer relationship with the Soviet Union.³⁷ If this interpretation of Kazzar's motives is valid, then he should have directed his efforts against Saddam Hussein, at least as far as ties with the Soviet Union were concerned. It is Saddam Hussein who perhaps more than any other Baathi leader, has effected a rapprochement with the Soviet Union.

So far as the Kurdish question is concerned, the military faction is as divided as its civilian counterpart. It would be inaccurate to identify the military faction with "appeasement" of the Kurds and the civilian with "inflexibility," or vice versa. As Dana Adams Schmidt, a veteran observer of the Iraqi scene, points out, while certain segments of the Iraqi military have been expressing "revulsion against the war" in Kurdistan, the Iraqi government is making a two-pronged political and economic effort to win the support of the Kurdish people.³⁸ A report in *An Nahar* indicates that the Iraqi military blames the civilian faction for not providing enough materiel to crush the Kurdish rebellion. In addition, *An Nahar* reports that the military faction wants to reestablish closer ties with Egypt and Jordan.³⁹ Although these reports appeared after the attempted coup, they do not invalidate our argument that the Kazzar effort could not have been directed primarily against the military faction because Kazzar, of all people, should have known about the existence of a split between the military hardliners and the military "appeasers," and between the civilian hardliners and their counterparts who wished to reconcile the Kurdish-Arab differences.

³⁶ (contd) opposition to the regime has by no means ended. *An Nahar* Vol.3, no.28 (10 July, 1972); *An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no. 41 (8 October, 1974); FBIS (10 October, 1974), p. E-1.

³⁷ *An Nahar*, Vol.4, no.30 (23 July, 1973), pp. 2-3. For an official account of the Kazzar attempt, see FBIS (2 July, 1973), pp. C-1, C-4; and FBIS (9 July, 1973), pp. C-1, C-3.

³⁸ *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 12, 1974.

³⁹ *An Nahar*, Vol. 5, no.40 (7 October, 1974).

Our assessment of the event is that Kazzar most probably acted for personal gains, ideology and territorial nationalism played little role in inspiring him to act against the government.⁴⁰

Although Saddam Hussein seems to have maintained his ascendancy in the RCC and the Regional Command of the Baath, a number of significant powers that were previously held by the Baath "collective leadership" were, after the abortive coup attempt in July 1973, given to President Bakr who might exercise these powers either directly or through the cabinet. The July 1970 amendment to the provisional constitution had provided for a strong president who could exercise his powers either directly or through a deputy, "an arrangement which favored Saddam Hussein's position." A post-July 1973 amendment to the constitution "disallowed the delegation of authority to a deputy (thus implicitly downgrading Hussein's position)" and permitted the president "to bypass the RCC to rule either directly or through a council of ministers provided for by the amendment."⁴¹

Notwithstanding, the new powers conferred on Bakr, who is a pragmatist and represents the military faction of the Baath, the civilian faction, especially its hardliners -- Ghanem Abdul Jalil, member of the Regional Command Council, chairman, Bureau of Vice Presidential Affairs of the Regional Command, and minister of higher education and scientific research; Syed Ali Ghannam, member of the Baath Party National (Pan-Arab) Command, chairman, Bureau of Public Relations in the Regional Command; and Tariq Aziz, chief ideologist of the Iraqi Baath, reserve member of the Regional Command Council, deputy chairman of the public relations bureau, and minister of information -- have become more influential in the decision-making process than was the case prior to the July 1973 events. Saddam Hussein, though the most influential leader of the civil faction, is not in full agreement with the civilian hardliners on such issues as relations with Arab States, reconciliation with the Kurds, and the acceptance of the

⁴⁰An official spokesman of the Iraqi regime claimed that the coup attempt was directed against President Bakr and Saddam Hussein. FBIS (9 July, 1973), p.C-1

⁴¹"The Iraqi Ba'ath Party," II, *An Nahar*, Vol. 5, no. 45 (11 November, 1974), n.p.; under this amendment, Bakr assumed the post of defense minister that had previously been held by Hammad Shehab, a relative of Bakr, who was killed during this abortive coup attempt. FBIS (27 July, 1973), p.C-1; and *The Christian Science Monitor*, 16 July, 1973, p.3.

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestine people (with its related issues such as whether or not to support the "rejection front."⁴²

Realizing that Iraq has been isolated in the region because of political, ideological, or territorial differences with all of its neighbors, except Turkey -- Saddam Hussein has endeavored to effect a rapprochement with Egypt whose strong ties with Iran and Saudi Arabia seem to worry the policymakers in Baghdad. Iraq and Egypt have exchanged a number of high-level visits by ministers, military officers, and by party officials, with a view to forging closer ties at all levels of the bureaucracies and the political parties. Saddam Hussein has already visited Egypt and President Sadat is scheduled to visit Iraq at the end of February 1975.⁴³ In these efforts, the Baath party's civilian hardliners are reputed to be opposed to Saddam Hussein who, at least in this area, is being supported by the military faction that is anxious to reassert Iraq's role in Arab affairs. An instance of this cooperation came to light last year when, at the initiative of the military faction, the Iraqi government agreed to lend \$700 million to Egypt. The civilian hardliners were reportedly strongly opposed to the move and Saddam Hussein "was forced to throw his weight behind the military."⁴⁴

⁴² *An Nahar*, Vol 5, no.46 (18 November 1974), p.3. This report excludes Tariq Aziz from the list of civilian hardliner, instead it names Abu Jabbar as one of the trio hardliners. This name showed up at a late stage of our writing and thus we could not ascertain his full name and functions. This name is not on the RCC, the Regional Command, the party bureaux or on the Cabinet. Another source, who does not wish to be identified, informed us that Tariq Aziz's "hardline" views in *Al Thawra* ought to place him in this category.

⁴³ The announcement of Sadat's visit was made in Cairo by *Al-Ahram* of January 3, 1975. FBIS (3 January, 1975), p. D-20.

⁴⁴ *An Nahar*, Vol. 5, no. 46 (18 November, 1974), p. 3. Earlier in February 1974, the Syrian Baath party had attacked the Iraqi Baath for its failure to fulfill its pan-Arab commitments, which called for mutual help and consultations. Because of this failure, the Iraqi Baath could not be "allowed to return to the Arab revolutionary fold ...," commented the Syrian party's organ *Al Baath* in its issue of February 24. Coincidentally, on the same day the *Al Baath* article appeared, the Iraqi Baath's main organ *Al Thawra* reported the RCC decision to grant \$50 million to Syria for the reconstruction of economically important installations destroyed during the October 1973 War. *The Arab World* (February 27, 1974) p. 6; and *The Arab World*. (February 28, 1974). p. 8.

Similarly, Saddam Hussein has endeavored to dissociate himself from the supporters of the "rejection front" in Iraq. During a recent meeting with Khaled Fahoum, president of the Palestine National Assembly, Saddam Hussein reportedly criticized the stance taken by the leaders of the "rejection front." Furthermore, Saddam Hussein promised the PLO leadership that Iraq's policies toward the Palestinian guerrilla organizations would undergo changes, presumably in favor of the PLO. Saddam Hussein reportedly informed the PLO that Iraq would no longer oppose the creation of a Palestinian state in the territory which might be evacuated by Israel and that Baghdad would raise no objections to the PLO's participation in the proposed Geneva peace talks.⁴⁵ If Saddam Hussein's view were reported accurately, the events which followed suggested that he was unable to convince his colleagues in Baghdad to adopt his recommendations on the Palestinian issue.⁴⁶

It is evident that despite Saddam Hussein's weighty prestige and immense influence in the RCC and the Regional Command, he faced a serious challenge from within the decision-making bodies. It is interesting to note that while Saddam Hussein was reportedly reassuring the PLO of the Iraqi regime's support, Baghdad Radio was announcing the arrival and activities of the rejection groups in the country. (Tariq Aziz, minister of information, under whose jurisdiction the broadcasting facilities fall, may have played up the event in order to embarrass Saddam Hussein.) During the five-day visit (October 6-October 10) of these dissident Palestinian groups, Baghdad Radio did not broadcast any report of any meeting between the Palestinians and Saddam Hussein, although their meetings with Hassan Bakr, Ali Ghannam, Dr. Abd al-Majid ar-Rafi, Dr. Abd Al-Wahhab al-Kayyali, and other national and regional leaders were promptly broadcast. From this

⁴⁵*An Nahar*, Vol. 5, no. 40 (7 October, 1974). p. 3; *An Nahar*, Vol.5, no.46 (18 November, 1974), p. 3.

⁴⁶In early October 1974, the Iraqi regime agreed to support the formation of an anti-PLO front that would work against the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and against similar other proposed solutions to the Arab-Israel conflict. The Baghdad government supported the following four groups: The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command (PFLP-GC), the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), and the Popular Struggle Front (PSF).

we may plausibly assume that Saddam Hussein did not meet with the Palestinian leaders who came to Iraq at the invitation of the Baath Party National Command.⁴⁷ That the invitation was issued by the National Command alone is an indication of a rift between the National and Regional commands, at least on the topic under discussion.

The Baath National Command under the leadership of Michel Aflaq has consistently refused to accept the idea of setting up a Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza strip. As early as April, 1974, Aflaq had expressed his views on the subject in an article published in the *Arab Revolutionary*, organ of the Iraqi-backed Palestinian organization, the Arab Liberation Front. In this article, Aflaq made four major points: he rejected the idea of a Palestinian state as part of the proposed peace settlement; opposed King Hussain's claim to the West Bank and opposed its return to the Hashemite king; urged all Arab states to make efforts to scuttle the peace efforts in Egypt and Syria; and that the Arabs must prepare for war, because only through force could the occupied lands be liberated.⁴⁸

Although Saddam Hussein is reputed to be an Aflaqite in ideology, his political decisions and statements are not always motivated by this ideology. As a responsible leader of a country beset by enormous political, ethnic, and technological problems that require compromises with adversaries and cooperation with neighbors and regional powers, Saddam Hussein cannot afford the luxury of ideological pronouncements that may prove to be counterproductive in achieving the country's goals.

For Michel Aflaq, it is a different story. As a philosopher and ideologist, he must look at the situation from a different perspective than that of Saddam Hussein. Aflaq has no day-to-day responsibilities for running a complex state, as does Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein sees Iraq caught between two regional powers -- Saudi Arabia and Iran -- both of whom are in the process of developing closer relations with Egypt and both of whom see Iraq as a threat to their conservative and monarchical regimes. In order

⁴⁷We must confess that our assumption is based on extremely tenuous grounds. During part of this period, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, prime minister of Bangladesh, was paying an official visit to Iraq and it is possible that Saddam Hussein's schedule did not allow him to meet with the Palestinians. F&IS (8 October 1974), pp. E5-6.

⁴⁸*The Arab World* (April 17, 1974), p. 11.

to break out of this isolation, Saddam Hussein and his supporters are seeking better ties with Egypt, whose national prestige has re-emerged after the October 1973 War. So far, Saddam Hussein has been a brilliant player on the political chessboard of Iraq, and through intrigue, political acumen, and the ruthless use of the National Security Agency, he has been able to eliminate most of his opponents from positions of power. Will he be able to remain at the top and survive the intrigues of a younger generation? We offer no prognosis on the chances of his survival.

It is assumed that unless a more moderate group begins to emerge in the Baath hierarchy, the civilian hardliners will make it difficult for Bakr and Saddam Hussein (both are moderates in their approaches to Iraq's problems and opportunities) to resolve the Kurdish-Arab dispute or to accept Egypt's leadership in resolving the Arab-Israel conflict.⁴⁹ Currently, Saddam Hussein seems to be playing the role of a conciliator between the civilian hardliners and the military, in the hope that the regime, faced with external opposition, would be spared the trials and tribulation of an internal split which could precipitately weaken, if not destroy, the Baath regime in Iraq.

The Kurds

As we indicated earlier, in addition to the Baath, there are two other clearly recognizable major interest groups that are engaged in political activities in Iraq.⁵⁰ These interest groups are: the Kurds, primarily represented by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Mullah Mustafa Barzani, and the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP). In the first part of this section, we will discuss the Kurdish problem, which has been a cause of serious concern to all Iraqi governments since the country became independent after World War I. Before World War I, the Kurdish population lived under two Middle East governments: the Ottoman Empire and Iran under the Qajar Dynasty. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire brought into independent

⁴⁹In view of Bakr's role in the suppression of the Kurdish revolt in 1963, a significant number of Kurds would probably disagree with our classification of Bakr as a moderate. In spite of their understandable objection, most observers of the Iraqi scene today consider Bakr as a moderate and pragmatic leader.

⁵⁰This does not mean that no other interest groups are politically active. Groups such as the Nasserites and the Qaddafites are difficult to identify, although occasional references are made to them in the Arab press.

existence a number of Arab States, two of which--Iraq and Syria--inherited a significant portion of the Kurdish population. Of the two states, Iraq inherited by far the largest number of the Kurds, who by this time had been stirred by the Western concept of nationalism. To the Kurds, like so many other ethnic and linguistic groups, the Wilsonian principle of "self-determination" made good sense, if the multinational empires were to be broken up in the "interest of world peace."

As a result of their cordial relations with the victorious European powers (especially the British, who typically used the Kurds and other Ottoman ethnic minorities to break up the empire), the Kurds were promised, under the treaty of Sevres, an autonomous Kurdistan and, "if they should show that they wanted it, the right to independence."⁵¹ Although the area promised to the Kurds was for the most part in eastern Turkey, the Kurdish aspirations went clearly beyond this artificial line which separated the Kurds in eastern Anatolia from their ethnic kinsmen in Iran, Iraq, and Syria. These aspirations pitted the Kurds against the nationalist Turks, the Iranians, and the British as the mandatory power in Iraq. The Kurdish "revolt" or "war of independence" in Anatolia that lasted for about twelve years was crushed by the Turkish military.⁵²

While the Kurds in Turkey were being suppressed, the Iraqi Kurds began to demand autonomy from the mandatory power (the British) of the country. Soon the Kurds discovered that the British were in no mood to accept the principle of self-determination in an area that was strategically and economically important to them. Having failed to convince the British to grant them autonomy, the Kurds, under Mullah Mustafa Barzani, began fighting against the Iraqi government and the British in 1931-1932. During the 1930s and the 1940s, the Kurds engaged the government forces in intermittent guerrilla warfare that brought them no nearer to their goal of autonomy at the end of two decades than they had been at the end of World War I.

During most of this period, the Kurds could not find a strong foreign ally who would be willing to support the Kurdish cause against the British and its client, the Iraqi government. This situation, however, took a

⁵¹Schmidt, *Journey Among Brave Men*, p. 53.

⁵²See Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks and Arabs*.

rather dramatic turn in the mid-1940s when the Soviet Union, availing itself of an opportunity provided by the presence in northern Iran of Russian troops (during 1941-1946), began to encourage the Azerbaijani Turks and Kurds in Iran to declare independence under the protection offered by Moscow.⁵³ In January 1946, the Kurds in Iran declared their independence as the Republic of Mahabad.⁵⁴ "As the territory of the new republic was contiguous to the Kurdish area in Iraq, the Iraqi Kurds were greatly encouraged by the political developments in Iran." Moreover, because of the Soviet role in the creation of the republic, Mullah Mustafa Barzani became "convinced" that Moscow would continue to support the Kurds, despite clear indications that neither the regional powers (Turkey, Iraq and Iran) nor the United States and Britain would be willing to recognize a Soviet-dominated Kurdish state in the heart of a strategic area.⁵⁵ As a result of this "conviction," Barzani moved several thousand of his tribal troops from Iraq into the Republic of Mahabad where he fought against the Iranian army.

In the meantime, the Soviet Union and Iran reached an understanding which would allow the Soviet Union to prospect for oil in northern Iran, in return for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Iran and for the discontinuation of their support to the Kurds and Azerbaijanis.⁵⁶ With the termination of Soviet help, the new republic came to a sudden end. For the Barzanis the only prudent choice left to them was to seek asylum in the Soviet Union in whom they had put an unduly high trust for their continuous survival as an autonomous people. In mid-June 1947, Mustafa Barzani, with a remnant of his army (about 500-800 soldiers), crossed over to the Soviet Union where he would stay for 11 years and four months before he would be

⁵³For an account of Soviet involvement with the Iranian Kurds and the Azerbaijanis, see George Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949); and Sepehr Zabih, *The Communist Movement in Iran* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

⁵⁴For a comprehensive treatment of the short-lived Republic of Mahabad, see William Eagleton, Jr., *The Kurdish Republic of 1946* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).

⁵⁵Eagleton, *The Kurdish Republic*, p. 76.

⁵⁶Eagleton observes that at that time "very few Azerbaijanis and virtually no Kurds realized that the Soviet Union, in exchange for the prospect of an oil concession, had decided their fate in a sense contrary to the private assurances of the preceding year." *The Kurdish Republic*, p. 73.

allowed to return to Iraq on October 6, 1959.⁵⁷

Between 1945 and 1959, there were no major disturbances in the Kurdish area of Iraq, despite daily "provocation in the Kurdish-language broadcasts" by a Soviet-sponsored clandestine radio operated by the Kurdish expatriots in the Russian Caucasus.⁵⁸ The main reason for this apparent Kurdish docility was that the Kurds had once again been hemmed in by the cooperation of the three Middle East governments most directly concerned with the Kurds--Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. Under the Baghdad Pact, these governments had agreed to cooperate in strengthening and protecting the territorial integrity of the member states. Under this arrangement, there was hardly any possibility for a foreign power to provide large-scale military help to the Kurds without creating a serious international dispute that would have involved not only the three Middle East powers but possibly also Britain and the United States. With the overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy and the installation in Baghdad of a "Revolutionary" regime in July 1958, this international cooperation began to weaken, thus destroying the *cordon sanitaire* that had prevented unfriendly foreign powers from interfering in the domestic affairs of these countries.

Soon after his return from the Soviet Union, Mullah Mustafa, with the cooperation of the former members of the outlawed Kurdish Nationalist Party (Heva) and the Freedom Group, founded the Kurdistan Democratic Party with a leftist program aimed at radical land reforms and coordination of Iraq's external and economic policies with those of the Soviet Union and other socialist states.⁵⁹ The KDP and the Iraqi Communist Party became two major links between the Qassem regime and the Soviet Union. Domestically, Qassem used the Kurds against the regime's opponents--from the big landlords and the monarchists to the Nasserite and unionist officers. The Qassem regime generously armed the Kurds and often used them against "rebellious" tribes or military officers who did not agree with Qassem's domestic and foreign policies.

On at least one crucial occasion in March 1959, the Kurds and the Communists (some of whom were also Kurds) saved the Qassem regime by

⁵⁷Eagleton, *The Kurdish Republic*, p. 128; Beerli, *The Army Officers*, p. 189.

⁵⁸Arfa, *The Kurds*, p. 129.

⁵⁹Arfa, *The Kurds*, pp. 73, 106, 120-126, and 130.

containing the Shawaf revolt in Mosul and by preventing the pro-Nasser Arabs of the Shammar tribe from joining in with the rebellious military units.⁶⁰ This is not to suggest that the Kurds were merely pawns in the hands of Qassem who could move them as he wished. It had become evident to the Kurds that theirs and the regime's interests had temporarily converged in the form of a common opposition to the pan-Arab sentiments in the country. In addition to this opposition, there were two other common factors which brought the Kurds closer to Qassem: opposition to the Baghdad Pact and friendship with the Soviet Union and the Communists. With the passage of time, however, the perceptions of the Kurds and the Baghdad regime of these "common factors" began to diverge, causing misunderstanding and mutual suspicions about each other's motives. By the spring of 1961, the Kurds once again revolted against the Iraqi regime, and the Qassem-Barzani "honeymoon" was over.

Before we proceed further, we should mention some of the constitutional gains achieved by the Kurds during a period of cooperation between them and the regime in Baghdad. Even before Barzani returned to Iraq, the Qassem regime had promulgated a new provisional constitution for the country. Declaring that Iraq was an integral part of the Arab nation (article 2), the constitution declared that the Arabs and Kurds are "considered partners in this fatherland, and their national rights within the unity of Iraq are acknowledged by this Constitution" (article 3).⁶¹ In return for the support of the Kurdish nationalists, Qassem recognized the claims of the KDP and he liberated hundreds of Kurdish prisoners who had been detained by the previous regime. In spite of these gestures of good will, however, Kurdish relations with Qassem did not improve beyond the limits achieved

⁶⁰Colonel Abd Al-Wahhab Shawaf, commander of the 5th Brigade of the 2nd Division, was stationed at Mosul in the spring of 1959. A son of the grand Mufti of Baghdad, he was an advocate of Arab unity. There seems to be some disagreement among scholars as to the role the Shammar tribe played in the Shawaf revolt. Arafa contends that the Kurds prevented their arrival from the outskirts of the Syrian desert (p. 132); Beerli, *Army Officers* (pp. 183-184), says that the Shammar tribe participated in what their leader reportedly called a war against "the Kurds and infidels." To us, the significance of this event is that it clearly reflects the Kurdish-Arab antagonism to which we have referred in our earlier discussion.

⁶¹Text of the Provisional Constitution in Muhammad Khalil, *The Arab States and the Arab League*, Vol. I (Beirut: Khayats, 1962), pp. 30-32.

during the Mosul collaboration.

As Qassem's loyal allies during the Mosul rebellion, the Kurds expected to see a great many material and political changes in Kurdistan: administrative autonomy, a Kurdish university and schools, and economic development of the region. None of these changes, however, would be forthcoming because Qassem's relations with the Communists had begun to deteriorate and "he was not interested in encouraging any element considered pro-Communist."⁶² (At that time, the Kurds were considered allies of the Communists.) Furthermore, the Kurds themselves were disunited to the extent that for almost two years, neither the KDP nor any other group found itself strong enough to speak on behalf of the Kurds. This in spite of the fact that the Qassem regime had already recognized the KDP as a representative body of the Kurds! In fact, not until July 1961 were the KDP and Mullah Mustafa able to draw up a memorandum outlining the Kurdish demands in Iraq. For the first time, this petition officially asked for wide Kurdish autonomy in Iraq and presented the following other demands to the government: that Kurdish be declared the principal official language in Kurdistan; that both the police and army units in the region be entirely composed of Kurds; that educational facilities in the region be placed under the Kurdish provincial government; that a substantial share of the oil revenues be spent in Kurdistan; that the vice-premier, assistant chief of staff, and assistant ministers of all ministries be Kurds; and that outside Kurdistan, the deployment of Kurdish army units be made only with the consent of the Kurdish leaders, except in the case of an external threat.⁶³

The rejection of these demands by the Qassem regime precipitated the Kurdish revolt that is still in progress in March 1975. In intensity and scope, the current Kurdish revolt is more serious and threatening to regional peace than it has been at any other time in the past. This is primarily because of an Iraqi-Iranian struggle for influence in the Persian

⁶²Beerli, *The Army Officers*, p. 190.

⁶³Arfa, *The Kurds*, p. 134.

Gulf, a struggle which has caused the two competitors to encourage the centrifugal forces across each other's national boundaries. (Iraq supports the Baluchis and the Arab tribes in Iran; and Iran aids the Kurds in Iraq. The Shiites of Iraq have strong sympathies with Iran, although they are not presently encouraged by Iran to create problems for the Baghdad regime.)

To return to the Kurdish rebellion of 1961: it continued intermittent with temporary cease-fires, armistices, and extended negotiations during the 1960s. The first attempt at a cease-fire took place soon after the Baathist coup of February 1963 when in March the military junta reaffirmed the government's recognition of the "natural rights" of the Kurds based on the concept of "administrative decentralization." Neither this declaration nor the negotiations that followed, however, produced a mutually acceptable solution to the conflict. Once again the fighting resumed; followed by another cease-fire and more negotiations without agreement.

In 1963, the Kurds presented another set of demands, which, however, did not significantly differ from their 1961 proposals.⁶⁴ While negotiations between the Kurds and the Baghdad government were in progress, a Baathi coup in Syria raised the hopes of the pan-Arabists for a union between Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. That the Kurds did not share the Arab enthusiasm for a union was reflected in a memorandum presented by the Kurds to the Iraqi delegation that was going to Cairo for the Arab unity talks. In this memorandum, the Kurds said that they would be willing to accept "decentralization" as proposed in the March proclamation of the Iraqi government, provided Iraq remained as presently constituted. If, however, Iraq joined other Arab states in a federation, the Kurds would demand autonomy "in the widest meaning of the term." And, finally, if Iraq became part of an Arab unitary state, the Kurds would demand a "separate region within that state."⁶⁵

After another period of extended hostilities, the Kurds and the Iraqi government under Premier Abdur Rahman Al-Bazzaz reached an agreement in June 1966. Under this agreement, the Kurds were promised wider political,

⁶⁴For a summary of their demands see Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 270-271.

⁶⁵Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, p. 272.

cultural, and economic rights. Although the Kurds were not fully satisfied with the provisions of this agreement, this was the best deal they could get from the government which was under constant counter pressure from the "anti Kurdish hardliners."

Soon after this agreement was reached, the Interim Constitution of Iraq was amended to reflect the Kurdish-Arab understanding of their respective roles and obligations in the state.⁶⁶ The new agreement provided, *inter alia*, that the "Kurdish nationality" would be recognized in the permanent constitution; that wider administrative powers would be given to locally elected councils; that in Kurdistan, the Kurdish language would be used for administrative and educational purposes; that parliamentary elections would be held at an early date, which would give the Kurds a proportional representation in the National Assembly and in all branches of the public service; that generous government grants would be given to Kurdish students for study abroad; that a faculty of Kurdish studies would be established at Baghdad University; that Kurdish officials would be appointed in Kurdistan; that permission would be granted for political association and for literary and political publications; that a general amnesty would be granted to political prisoners "when violence ended"; that a special ministry would be established to supervise reconstruction and to coordinate administration in the various Kurdish districts; and that the evicted Kurds would be either resettled in their previous homes or would be compensated for the property losses.⁶⁷

Whether or not the government intended to implement the agreement in full, the provisions of the June agreement in themselves were a clear victory for the Kurds who it seems, had negotiated with the government from a position of strength. Whatever its strengths and weaknesses, this

⁶⁶After the overthrow of Qassem, the new military junta annuled the Provisional Constitution and replaced it by an Interim constitution. Unlike the Provisional Constitution which had declared the Kurds as co-partners, the Interim constitution made no such specific reference. In this respect, the Interim constitution merely stated that "All Iraqis are equal by law," and that "all Iraqis, including both Arabs and Kurds, shall cooperate to safeguard their homeland." Europa, *Middle East 1965-66*, p. 243,

⁶⁷Lorenzo Kent Kimball, *The Changing Pattern of Political Power in Iraq* (New York: Robert Speller, 1972), pp. 141-142.

agreement did maintain a tense truce between the government and the Kurds for almost two years.

In the meantime, the Kurds began to express dissatisfaction with the slowness with which the provisions of the June agreement were being implemented. The long promised elections were being continuously postponed, with the excuse that the disintegrating forces in the country did not encourage the carrying out of general elections properly. After nearly a year of the agreement, not all Kurdish political prisoners had been released; and those who were let out were released on a four-to-twelve months' probation. By April 1967, the Kurds were able to start a Kurdish newspaper, *Al-Taahi*, which had been authorized by the government in the June 1966 agreement. It was primarily through this medium that the Kurds enlightened the public of their grievances and demands.

In the first issue of *Al-Taahi* (April 29, 1967), Barzani expressed his disappointment in the government's inability to implement a large part of the program promised under the previous year's agreement. He was pointedly critical of Aref's reluctance to hold general elections and to release Kurdish political prisoners.

Within a week of its first appearance, *Al-Taahi* was suspended for 30 days on the grounds that it had published statements "prejudicial to national unity." This action of the government caused the two Kurdish ministers to resign from the cabinet and thus created further tension between the Kurds and the government.⁶⁸

The next serious effort at resolving the Kurdish problem was made soon after the Baath recaptured power in July 1968. On August 3, 1968, speaking on behalf of the RCC, President Bakr said that the new government would abide by the June 1966 agreement and that it would negotiate with the Kurds on the basis of this agreement. Although there was a temporary respite in the hostilities, the Kurdish problem remained one of the major concerns of the government. It should be recalled that one of the three Aflaqian principles that had been adopted by the Iraqi Baath had called for an equitable settlement of the Kurdish problem as a means of strengthening national unity, which was considered a prerequisite for an effective Iraqi role in the Arab revolution and the Arab movement toward unity. The new Baath regime, especially Saddam Hussein Takriti, was apparently determined

⁶⁸Kimball, *The Changing Pattern*, p. 143.

to resolve amicably the Kurdish problem which had been a major source of domestic friction and a cause of coups by dissatisfied military officers.

The Kurdish problem was so complex that no amount of "good-will" and "sincerity" on the part of a small group of decision-makers could change within a brief period the mutually hostile attitudes and perceptions of the Kurdish and the Arab masses. As mentioned earlier, the Kurdish problem was no longer a merely domestic issue. The covert involvement of Iran and reputedly of Israel in the Kurdish affair made the resolution of the dispute even less conducive to an amicable solution, although for the same factors, the need for its solution became more urgent than before. Furthermore, the generous military aid provided by Iran made the Kurds less flexible in their demands for regional autonomy and for sharing the oil revenues from Kurdistan oil fields. In the minds of some Iraqis, the Kurdish dispute has rightly or wrongly been associated with the Shah's "megalomania" manifested by the use of force in "occupying" three islands at the head of the strait of Oman and by his declared policy of making Iran the dominant military and economic power in the area.⁶⁹

If the Iranian involvement was not bad enough, the rumored involvement of Israeli instructors among the Kurdish guerrillas made the situation even more complex and less conducive to a peaceful solution. The Iraqis seem to believe that the Kurds under Barzani (not all Kurds, of course) had become a tool of Iranian imperialism and of Zionism. Under these circumstances, it was extremely difficult for Saddam Hussein to make any new major concessions to the Kurds. Although Saddam Hussein seems to have been intellectually and philosophically committed to resolving the Kurdish problem, political and practical difficulties created considerable pressure in the opposite direction.

Nevertheless, after nearly two years of negotiations and armed hostilities, the Baghdad government announced a 15-point program for ending the Kurdish dispute. This program (known as the March 1970 agreement) promised the Kurds a number of new political and cultural incentives for ending the long and intermittent civil war. Under the March 1970 plan, the government

⁶⁹It should be noted that, notwithstanding the Iranian support and sympathy for the Iraqi Kurds, the Iranians certainly did not want to see an autonomous Kurdish region established in the territory contiguous to the area where Iranian Kurds live. Because the establishment of such a region would encourage the Iranian Kurds to demand for themselves similar rights from Tehran.

promised to take the following measures:

- . recognition of the existence of the Kurdish nationality; this would be recognized in the new provisional constitution.
- . establishment of a university in Sulamaniya and a Kurdish educational academy.
- . teaching of Kurdish in all schools, institutes, universities, teachers' schools, the military college, and police academy.
- . establishment of a Kurdish printing house that would publish the cultural and scientific papers and books by Kurdish men of letters and scientists.
- . declaration of *nowruz* (the Kurdish new year) as a national holiday.
- . creation of a new governorate of Dohuk (Dihok), to be separated from the liwa of Mosul, near the Turkish border.
- . decentralization of the local government.
- . granting of a general amnesty to all civilians and soldiers involved in the Kurdish war.⁷⁰

Immediately following this statement, the RCC announced that it has approved the 15-point program for the Kurdish peace settlement. In view of its operational significance, we reproduce below text of the March, 1970 declaration, as broadcast by Baghdad Radio:

1--Kurdish shall be the official language alongside Arabic in the areas where Kurds constitute a majority of the population. Classes shall be taught in Kurdish in these areas. Arabic shall be taught in all schools in which classes are taught in Kurdish, while Kurdish shall be taught as a second language in all other schools throughout Iraq in accordance with the limits prescribed by law.

2--The participation of our Kurdish brothers in the government without discrimination and their appointment to public posts on this basis--including important and key posts in the state such as cabinet ministries, army commands, and other such posts--has been and still is one of the important points which the revolution government plans to achieve. While approving of this principle,

⁷⁰FBIS (12 March 1970), pp. C-3 - C-4.

the revolutionary government reiterates the need for work to apply it justly, taking into consideration qualifications, population proportion, and the deprivations which our Kurdish brothers have suffered in the past.

3--In view of the backwardness which afflicted the Kurds in the past, both culturally and educationally, plan shall be drawn up to redress this by:

A--Speeding up the implementation of the Revolution Command Council's resolutions concerning the linguistic and cultural rights of the Kurdish people and the control of the preparation and direction of the programs pertaining to Kurdish national affairs over the radio and television at the Kurdish Information and Culture General Directorate.

B--Returning to school students forced to abandon their studies because of violence in the area, irrespective of their actions, or finding suitable solutions for their problems.

C--Increasing the number of schools in the Kurdish area, raising the Kurds' standard of education, and accepting Kurdish students in the universities and military academies and granting them scholarships in just proportion to their numbers.

4--Officials in the administrative units inhabited by a Kurdish majority shall be Kurds, or Kurdish-speaking persons, should the required number of Kurdish officials already exist. Key officials--such as governors, district officers, police chiefs, and public security chiefs--shall be appointed and immediately begin developing the state machinery in the area after consultation with the higher committee entrusted with the implementation of this statement, to insure this implementation, and to bolster national unity and stability in the area.

5--The government accepts the Kurdish people's right to establish student, youth, women's, and teachers' organizations of their own. These organizations shall become members of similar national Iraqi organizations.

6--A--Operation of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Revolution Command Council resolution No. 59 of 5 August 1968 shall be extended until the date of the issuance of this statement and shall be made to cover all those accused of committing acts of violence in the Kurdish area.

B--Workers, officials, and employees, both civilian and military, shall be reinstated in the service, without taking into consideration questions of cadre. The civilians shall be employed in the Kurdish area in accordance with the needs of that area.

7--A--A body of specialists shall be formed to raise the standard of the Kurdish area in all fields in the shortest possible time, to compensate it for the losses it suffered in recent years, and to allocate sufficient funds for this. The body shall be attached to the Northern Affairs Ministry.

B--An economic plan shall be formulated to insure the development and equality of all parts of Iraq after taking into consideration the conditions of backwardness in the Kurdish area.

C--Pensions shall be allocated for the families of those martyrs who fell during the regrettable fighting, be they members of the Kurdish armed movement or others. Pensions shall also be granted to those who have been disabled or disfigured because of the conditions in the north in accordance with special legislation based on laws in force.

D--Immediate action will be taken to provide relief to the victims and the needy through housing and other projects, insuring work for the unemployed and providing suitable assistance in cash and in kind and reasonable compensation to the victims who need assistance. This will be done through the higher committee. Persons affected by the previous paragraphs are exempted from this.

8--People of Arab and Kurdish villages shall be returned to their former places of residence. If the areas cannot be used as residential areas and are requisitioned by the government for the public interest and in accordance with law, the people will be resettled in neighboring areas and shall be compensated for resulting damages.

9--There will be immediate action to apply agrarian reform in the Kurdish area and to adjust it in such a way as to liquidate feudalistic relations. All peasants shall obtain suitable plots of land and shall be exempt from agricultural tax arrears that have accumulated during years of regrettable fighting.

10--It was agreed to amend the provisional constitution as follows:

A--The Iraqi people consist of two main nationalities: The Arab and Kurdish nationalities. The constitution will acknowledge Kurdish national rights and the rights of all minorities within the Iraqi unity.

B--The following paragraph will be added to Article 4 of the constitution: The Kurdish language will be an official language in the Kurdish area, in addition to the Arabic language.

C--The above shall be stated in the permanent constitution.

11--The radio station and the heavy weapons will be returned to the government. This will be connected with implementation of the final stages of the agreement.

12--One of the vice presidents of the republic will be a Kurd.

13--The governorates law will be amended in harmony with the contents of this statement.

14--After this statement is broadcast, the necessary measures will be taken through consultation with the Supervisory Higher Committee to unify the provinces and the administrative units with majority Kurdish populations in accordance with an official census which will be carried out. The state will strive to develop this administrative unity and deepen and expand the Kurdish people's exercise of all their rights in this unit to insure that they enjoy self-government. Until this administrative unit is achieved, Kurdish national affairs will be coordinated in periodic meetings between the higher committee and the northern region governorate. Since self-government will take place within the framework of the Iraqi Republic, the exploitation of the natural resources in this region will be within the jurisdictions of the powers of this republic.

15--The Kurdish people will participate in the legislative authority in accordance with the proportion of the Kurdish population.⁷¹

It should be noted that this declaration, while granting wider autonomy to the Kurds, did not make any specific commitments about the sharing of oil revenues or the inclusion of Kurdish representatives in the RCC. Furthermore, only vague and non-committal references were

⁷¹FBIS (12 March 1970), pp.C-4--C-6

made to end job discrimination against the Kurds. Although soon after the March 1970 agreement five Kurds were appointed to the Cabinet, a Kurdish vice-president provided for under this agreement was not appointed until April 21, 1974. Despite the early enthusiasm and mutual praise expressed by the Kurdish and the Baathist leaders, there were reasons to believe that this agreement did not plug all the loopholes which had been the causes of the failure of earlier declarations and agreements.⁷²

According to an unconfirmed report from Beirut, a "secret appendix" to the March agreement contained clauses concerning the disposition of the anti-Barzani Kurdish militia known as "the forces of Saladin;" the dissolution of a dissident Kurdish party led by Barzani's archenemy, Jalal Talabani, a Kurd who had been fighting against the Barzani forces since 1966; and the maintenance of a Kurdish force of 10,000 as national border guards.⁷³

If this report is correct, it shows that Barzani was able to retain control over a fairly large armed force and at the same time, succeeded in alienating his opponent from the government which had been the primary source of material and economic aid to the anti-Barzani forces. At least for a while Barzani became the undisputed Kurdish leader in Iraq.

No sooner had the accord been announced, than there were reports that the agreement reached between the Iraqi government and the Kurds was faltering. Once again Barzani stated that the Kurds were dissatisfied with the way the Iraqi government was implementing its side of the agreement. Specifically, the Kurdish leader accused the Baghdad regime of tergiversation on issues such as the appointment of Kurdish governors for the Erbil, Mosul, Sulaimaniya, and Kirkuk provinces. Barzani said that unless the RCC appointed Kurdish governors to these districts he would not name a Kurdish vice president for the republic.⁷⁴ Additionally, Barzani once again

⁷²Expressions of joy and satisfaction were broadcast by Baghdad Radio and by FBIS (12 March 1970), pp. C-4--C-6.

⁷³*Daily Star* (Beirut), March 13, 1970, as quoted in FBIS (18 March 1970), p.C-1; *The Christian Science Monitor* (5 October 1971), p.2.

⁷⁴Dana Adams Schmidt, "Iraq-Kurd accord is said to falter," *The New York Times* (17 August 1970), p.7.

rejected the notion (enshrined in the Iraqi constitution) that Iraq was part of the Arab world. This has been a constant irritant between the Kurds and the Arabs since at least the promulgation of the 1958 constitution. As early as 1960, the Kurdish newspaper *Khabat*, then the organ of the KDP, categorically rejected this idea on the grounds that historically Kurdistan was never considered as part of the Arab lands. "Throughout history," the paper said:

it sometime happened that Kurdistan either wholly or in part found itself in an Islamic state, as was the case with respect to many Muslim countries. Nevertheless, Kurdistan was not considered a part of the Arab lands.... It is enough to consider the historical facts and concrete reality which clearly show that the eternal Iraqi Republic consists of a part of the Kurdish nation, whose country is Kurdistan, and a part of the Arab nation, whose country is the great Arab homeland. . .⁷⁵

In August 1970, Barzani raised the same issue, which was a portent for the resumption of the rhetorical and military battles.⁷⁶

For four more years, between March 1970 and March 1974, the Kurds and the Iraqi government endeavored to resolve their differences and to alleviate their suspicion of each other. While the Kurdish guerrilla activities continued throughout most of this period, the two kept their lines of communication open for consultations. Finally, just a day or so before the expiration of a deadline set in March 1970, the Iraqi government proclaimed local self-rule for the Kurdish people. The terms of the autonomy plan, however, fell far short of the Kurdish demands and expectations. Briefly, the government declaration reiterated the fact that Kurdish was one of the two official languages of the country, set up a special regional budget, and provided for the election of a legislative council and an executive council for the Kurdish region. However, the president of the republic retained strong executive power over the Kurdish institutions which could be dissolved at his discretion. To discourage

⁷⁵Beerli, *Army Officers*, pp. 190-191.

⁷⁶See John K. Cooley, "New Attack Breaches Iraqi-Kurdish Accord," *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 5, 1971, p. 2. "Attack" in this context refers to the assassination attempt on Mullah Mustafa by nine religious Shaikhs who came to visit the Kurdish leader in his stronghold at Nawbirdan. For a detailed account of this event, see David Hirst, "Baath-Kurdish Pact Breached in Iraq," *The Washington Post*, December 2, 1971, p. F1. In this story, Hirst predicted that hostilities between the Kurds and the Iraqi forces would break out in the spring of 1972.

any thought of the government's weakening will in Kurdish affairs, the declaration emphasized that the Kurdish region was an integral part of Iraq.

In their negotiations with the government, the Kurds had demanded "all but veto power over legislation in Baghdad pertaining" to the Kurdish region. The Kurds had also asked the government to define clearly the boundaries of the autonomous region. The Kurds wanted to be assured that the oil-rich district of Kirkuk would be an integral part of the region. Although none of these demands proved to be acceptable to the government, the Baghdad regime did promise to define the region's boundaries in accordance with the new census that would be conducted within the framework of an earlier census taken in 1957. These conditions were immediately rejected by the Kurds who, two days after the government announcement of autonomy, resumed hostilities against Iraqi forces in the northern region.⁷⁷

Once again, the resumption of hostilities created an open rift amongst the Kurds -- between those who accepted the autonomy plan and those who rejected it, the latter being led by Mullah Mustafa and the former by a number of anti-Barzani Kurds, including his son Obeidullah Mustafa Barzani, minister of state; Taha Moehiddin Maarouf, the vice president of Iraq; Ismail Mulla Aziz; Hashem Akrawi, president of the Executive Council of the Kurdish region; Aziz Akrawi, and a number of others.⁷⁸

⁷⁷Text of President Bakr's speech giving details of the autonomy framework may be conveniently found in FBIS (12 March 1974), pp. C-11-C-18; also see *The Arab World* (8 February 1974), pp. 7-8; Raymond Anderson, "Limited local Autonomy Granted to Kurds in Iraq," *The New York Times*, 12 March 1974, p.5; Joseph Fitchett, "Kurds Take to Hills, Rejecting Iraqi Plan," *The Washington Post*, 16 March 1974, p.A-12; "It's Those Kurds Again," *The Economist* (23 March 1974), p. 38. Commenting on the Kurdish demand that Kirkuk Province be included in the autonomous region, Saddam Hussein pointed out that this province was populated by a number of ethnic groups, including the Kurds, the Turkomen, and the Arabs, and therefore it would not be right to include it in the region. He said that the RCC had proposed a joint-administration for the province but that this proposal was rejected by the Kurds who demanded either an outright inclusion of the province in the region or if that was not acceptable to the government, a joint administration for Kirkuk and attachment of it to the self-rule region. Both these proposals were rejected by the government. FBIS (15 March 1974), pp. C-1-C-4.

⁷⁸"Split Reported within Kurdish Democratic Party: Barzani Accused of Dictatorship." *The Arab World* (12 February 1974), p. 7; the Akrawis and Obeidullah Barzani defended their defection from the Barzani faction on the ground that Mullah Mustafa had become totally "beholden" to the imperialists -- Iran and Israel.

This group calls itself the Kurdistan Revolutionary Party; its leader is Abdel Sattar Sharif.

Since the resumption of hostilities in March 1974, there have been continuous reports of intensive fighting in the Kurdish region along the Iranian border. Both sides are reportedly using sophisticated modern weapons supplied to the Kurds allegedly by Iran and to Iraq by the Soviet Union. Since entering into a treaty of friendship with Iraq in 1972, Moscow has stopped expressing its sympathies with the anti-government Kurds in the country. Moscow has occasionally "urged" the two disputants to resolve their differences in the spirit of "socialist brotherhood," but the Soviet Union has not put sufficiently effective pressure on either side to move toward a peaceful goal. Moscow, of course, does not have much leverage over the Kurds, especially Barzani, who does not recall his *sojourn* in Russia with fond memories.⁷⁹ From all indications, it seems that the Barzani group will continue to engage in guerrilla activities against the Iraqi forces, as long as Iran intends to use the Kurds as a tool to put pressure on the Baathist regime in the hope of weakening its hold on the country.

On its part, the Iraqi government seems determined to follow through with its autonomy plan. The Baghdad regime has launched a three-pronged attack against the Kurdish problem; it has given considerable political voice to the Kurds, both at the Cabinet and at the local levels; it is engaged in an economic development plan for the region; and it is engaged in a military slowdown with the rebellious Kurds. Although typically both sides are claiming military victories, indications are that during the last months of 1974 the Kurds were badly hurt in engagements against the Iraqi tanks, long-range artillery, and the Iraqi airforce.

⁷⁹In March 1974, *Pravda* reportedly attacked the Kurds for their refusal to accept the autonomy plan. Joseph Fitchett, "Kurds seize area along Iraq Border," *The Washington Post*, 19 March 1974, p. 1; "Kurds seek U.S. aid for Anti-Soviet Stand," *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 20, 1974, p.2.

In their struggle for autonomy, the Kurds have sought aid from any source willing to help them; they have not allowed ideological, religious, or ethnic considerations to influence their decisions on the sources of material and financial aid. The Kurdish goal has always been national, not ideological. In the past, the Kurds, fighting both against Iran and Iraq, willingly accepted aid from the Soviet Union. Today, they are aligned with Iran against the Baathist regime in Iraq. As it happened before in the case of the 'Republic of Mahabad, the Kurds have once again been "abandoned" by the Soviet Union for its "larger self-interest" in Iraq. Will Iran continue to help the Kurds? This is a question many Kurds are asking themselves.

The Communists

The Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), the third and final interest group to be considered here, was founded as a clandestine organization in 1934. During the next quarter of a century, the Iraqi Communists remained underground and generally functioned from neighboring countries, such as Lebanon. The violent overthrow of the monarchy in July 1958 and the subsequent split between Qassem and the pan-Arabist officers (also called the Nasserites) led by Abdul Salam Aref provided the Iraqi Communists an opportunity to function more openly. In his struggle to consolidate power against the enemies of his regime, Qassem relied on the Communists (and others) for support. During the Shawaf revolt, Qassem armed the Communists and the Kurds to fight against the rebellious military unit and against the Shammar tribe that supported the Nasserite officers. Realizing that Qassem had moved too close to the Communists the Baathists withdrew their support of the regime. This action reopened the Baath-Communist "ideological" rift that went back to the early days of the establishment of the Baath.

Although Qassem had received Communist support against the pan-Arab opponents of his regime, he was unwilling to allow the Communists to broaden their base of activities. Without allowing them to seize political initiative and to become a serious threat to his own position, Qassem exploited the Communists as a countervailing force against his enemies. Taking advantage of the traditional split in the Iraqi Communist movement, Qassem prevented the strengthening of the ICP by recognizing a less representative Communist group led by Doud al-Saigh, while the "genuine" party, *Itihad al-Sha'al* (unity of the people), was declared illegal. Although the Communist press was

banned in 1959 and many front organizations also came under attack, the ICP members were not seriously harassed at the official level for some time. The banning of the Communist press, however, was a portent to the relentless persecution of the Communists that began in early 1961.

During this period, hundreds of Communists were tried for their alleged role in the Kirkuk disturbances and other riots in 1959. The violent overthrow of the Qassem regime in February 1963 caused the suspension of Communist activities in Iraq. Between February and November 1963, the Baathists, who came to power in Baghdad, carried out a policy of persecution and of vengeance against their erstwhile allies, the Iraqi Communists.⁸⁰

During the regimes of the Aref brothers (November 1963-July 1968), the Communists did not fair too badly, considering that the two brothers were reputedly "fiercely" anti-Communist. While they were not allowed to function openly, the Communists were not hunted down by the state police either. During this period, there was a cautious truce between the military regimes and the Communists. Perhaps one reason for this was Abdul Salam Aref's efforts to improve relations with the Soviet Union. Another reason could be that there was a real desire on the part of the government to unite the Iraqi people, regardless of their ethnic and ideological orientations.

The second Baath government that came to power in July 1968 manifested much more tolerance toward the Communists in Iraq. Right from the beginning, the Baathist government endeavored to form a united front of the various political factions in the country. Their initial effort, however, was unsuccessful because the Baathists were unwilling to share power with the non-Baathist groups. Consequently, until December 1969, the ICP remained outside the power structure of the country. However, by the end of the year, the Baath and the ICP had reached a compromise under which the government agreed to appoint Aziz Sharif, a prominent leftist, as minister of

⁸⁰In another study, we have made an intensive analysis of the role of the Communists in Iraq. See R. D. McLaurin and M. Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), pp. 275-314.

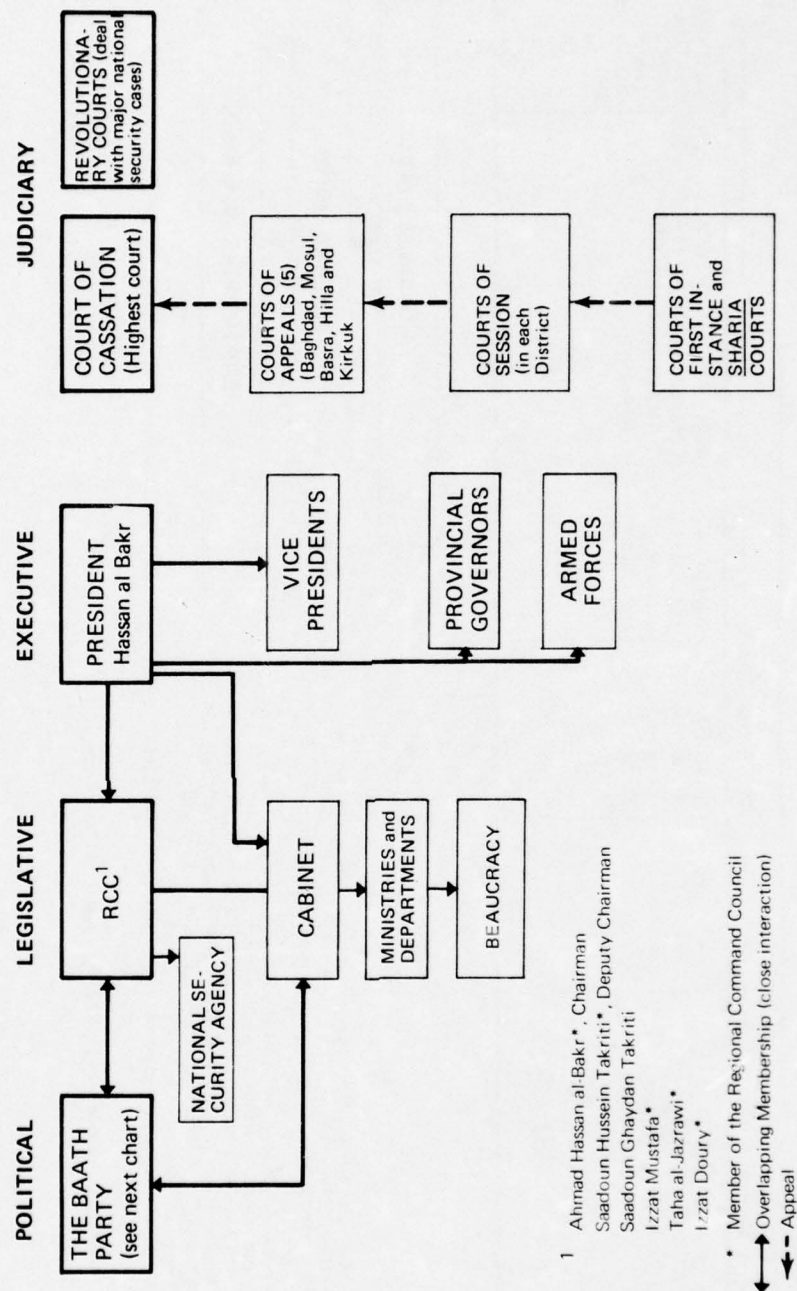
justice.⁸¹ In return, the Communist Party agreed to support the regime's efforts to establish a united front in the country.

In addition to the mutual distrust between the ICP and the Baath caused by the traditional conflict, there were two other major factors that precluded a rapprochement between the two ideologically oriented parties. One factor was related to the traditional support that the Communist Party had extended to the Kurds in their fight for autonomy. The other factor was the attitude of the ICP toward the Palestine issue. On the latter issue, the ICP had generally followed the Moscow line and had called for a peaceful solution of the conflict. In 1970, when the Baath government of Iraq rejected the Rogers peace plan, the pro-Soviet faction of the ICP followed suit and called for a peaceful solution of the Israeli-Arab conflict. Since the signing of the Iraqi-Soviet treaty in April 1972, the Iraqi Communists have generally supported the Iraqi government's statements on the Middle East conflict; the Iraqi Communists, just as the Soviet Union, are calling for an international conference at Geneva for resolving this dispute. On the Kurdish question, the ICP has declared its support for the government's autonomy plan that was implemented in 1974.

As a result of closer collaboration between the Baathists and the Communists in Iraq, the Baghdad government, in August 1973, gave permission to the ICP to publish its own newspaper under the title of *Tariq al Shaab* (The People's Way). In addition, Mukkaram Al-Talabani (a Communist Kurd) and Amir Abdullah (a Communist Arab) were added to the cabinet in 1972. Talabani was given the portfolio of irrigation and Abdullah that of minister of state without portfolio. In a later reshuffle of the cabinet, Aziz Sharif was moved from justice to minister of state without portfolio, perhaps a demotion for the leader of the Progressive Democrats. In the latest Cabinet changes, which were announced on November 1974, the two representatives of the ICP (Talabani and Abdullah) and Aziz Sharif of the Progressive Democrats retained their respective positions.⁸²

⁸¹*An Nahar*, Vol. 1, no. 9 (4 May 1970), n.p. Aziz Sharif is a member of the Presidium of the World Council of Peace and a recipient of the Lenin Peace Prize. Although he was closely associated with the ICP, he was never a member of it. His brother, Abdul Rahman, who was a member of the ICP Central Committee, was executed following the Baathist *coup* in 1963.

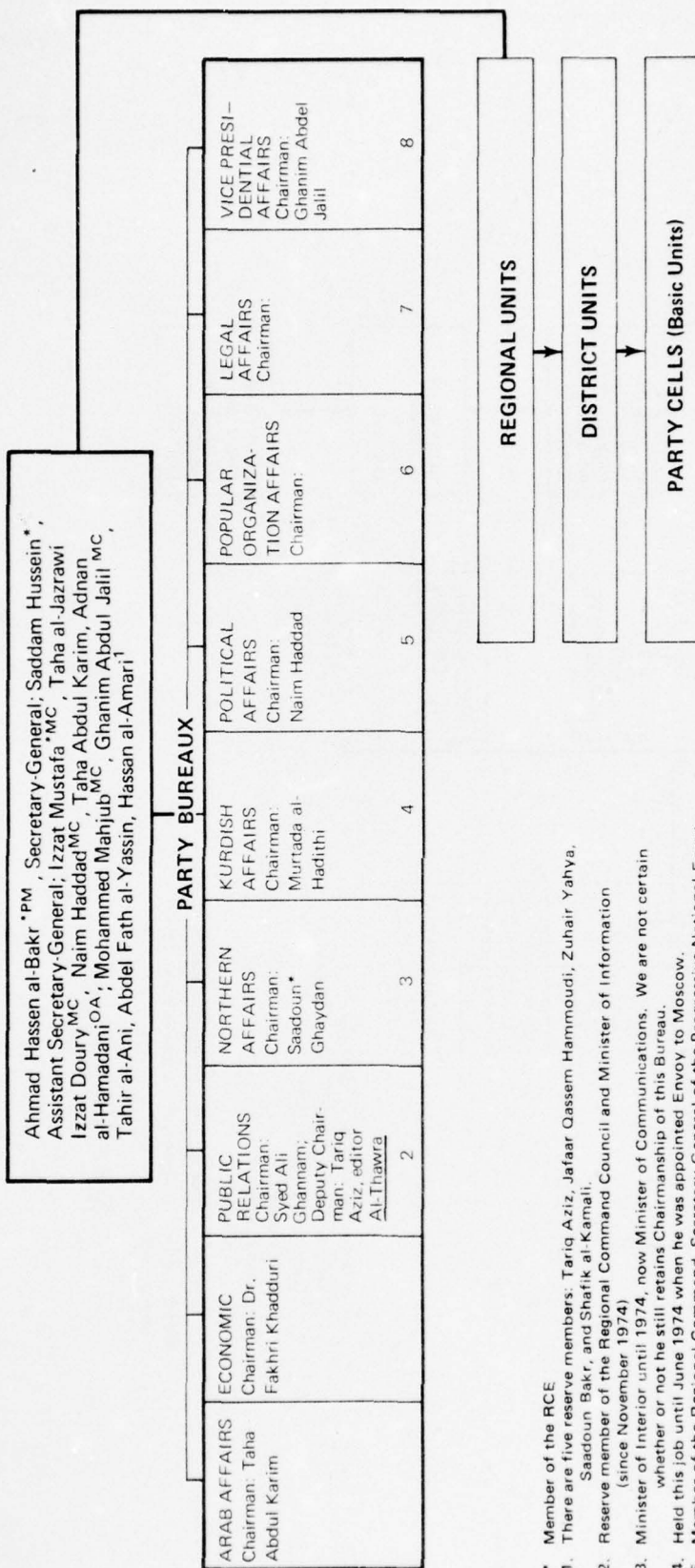
⁸²FBIS (12 November 1974), p. E-1. Dr. Mukkaram Al-Talabani is president of the Iraqi-Soviet Friendship Association.



Source: Europa, Middle East 1974.75, p.384.

Figure 3. STRUCTURE OF THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT

THE REGIONAL COMMAND COUNCIL



* Member of the RCE

1. There are five reserve members: Tariq Aziz, Jafaar Qassem Hammoudi, Zuhair Yahya, Saadoun Bakr, and Shafik al-Kamali.
2. Reserve member of the Regional Command Council and Minister of Information (since November 1974)
3. Minister of Interior until 1974, now Minister of Communications. We are not certain whether or not he still retains Chairmanship of this Bureau.
4. Held this job until June 1974 when he was appointed Envoy to Moscow.
5. Member of the Regional Command, Secretary-General of the Progressive National Front, Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab Front Participating in the Palestinian Revolution, and Minister of Youth.
6. Until July 1973, Abdel Khalek Samarrai was Chairman of this bureau; present occupant unknown.
7. Unknown
8. After the appointment of Maaruf as Vice President in 1974, this bureau may have undergone changes.

PM = Prime Minister
MC = Member of Cabinet
OA = Secretary General of the Followup Committee in Charge of Oil Affairs and Agreements.

Figure 4. THE IRAQI BAAATH PARTY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The Governmental Structure

Iraq is ruled by a strong presidential-type of government. In addition to being the chief executive of the government, Hassan al-Bakr is commander in chief of the armed forces, prime minister, minister of defense, and president of the Revolutionary Command Council, the highest legislative body in Iraq. The president of the republic has the authority to appoint ministers to the Cabinet, to transfer them, and to dismiss them at his own discretion. Theoretically, all ministers are answerable to the prime minister-cum-president, but in reality, the ministers who concurrently hold membership in the RCC are not as subservient to him as those technocrats who hold no privileged position in the Baath party hierarchy. The president also has the authority to dismiss the Vice President of the Republic. The President is elected by a two-thirds majority of the RCC; and he is responsible to the Council.

Although in 1973 some powers were removed from the RCC jurisdiction, this Council still remains as the most powerful decision-making body in the country. As discussed earlier, its membership has shrunk from 75 in 1969 to 6 at the end of 1974.⁸³ The provisional constitution states that the RCC is the highest legislative body and that this body will continue to make law until a popularly elected National Assembly comes into existence. Because the Baath Party is not a popular organization, the Baathists in power have not made any serious effort to hold elections for the proposed national assembly. When after the March 1970 declaration the Kurds demanded an election, as provided for in the autonomy plan, the Government said that conditions were not conducive for holding an election.

⁸³ Although *Europa, Middle East 1974-75*, p. 382, states that there are 12 members of the RCC, to the best of our knowledge this is not the case. This source itself provides only eight names; one Murtada al-Hadithi which was dropped in June 1974 and another, Colonel Shafiq Hammadi al-Daraji is listed as secretary general. The latter probably holds an administrative job, because his name does not appear in any other source. Furthermore he is not a member of the regional command which provides all members of the RCC, with the sole exception of General Saadoun Ghaydan; the other six names are same as given by us above. (Also see the organizational chart).

The provisional constitution of Iraq provides for several vice presidents to be elected by the RCC. For a while, Hardan Takriti and Salih Mehdi Ammash were functioning as vice presidents, in addition to their memberships in the RCC. By September 24, 1971, both Hardan Takriti and Salih Ammash had been removed from all official positions and they were replaced by Saddam Hussein Takriti as the vice president.

Although under the March 11, 1970 accord with the Kurds, the RCC had agreed to appoint a Kurdish vice president, this was not done until 1974 when Maaruf assumed the position. Since then, Saddam Hussein seems to have abandoned his vice presidential role. It should be noted that since the Baath took over power in July 1968, Maaruf is the first vice president who does not hold membership in the Revolution Command Council and the vice president does not possess the same powers as did his predecessors. Prior to the appointment of Maaruf, only the RCC could dismiss a vice president (after the aborted coup of July 1973, the powers of dismissal were given to the president). Under the present laws, the vice president performs ceremonial functions only; he has little substantive power. Previously, especially under Saddam Hussein, the vice president would have assumed presidential power in case the president were incapacitated or died. Since July 1973, this provision is no longer applicable; under the current provisions, the RCC must elect a new president if the incumbent is unable to perform his duties. Thus the Kurdish vice president stands no chance of succeeding to Bakr.

The cabinet is appointed by the president, in consultation with the RCC and the Baath Party Regional Command. With the exception of four RCC members (Saadoun Ghaydon Takriti, Izzat Mustafa, Taha al-Jazrawi and Izzat Doury), four Regional Command members (Naim Haddad, Mohammed Mahjub, Ghanim Abdel Jalil, Taha Abdul Karim), and one reserve member of the Regional Command, Tariq Aziz--most other cabinet ministers are technocrats and bureaucrats who are responsible only for the implementation of the policy that is formulated by the RCC and the Regional Command. The input of the technocrats and bureaucrats in the decision-making process seems almost negligible.

One of the most notable aspects of the Iraqi governmental structure is the imbricating membership the country's three most influential political institutions maintain with each other. Since the Provisional Constitution provides that the members of the RCC must be elected from among the Baath

party's regional leadership, it automatically places the Regional Command Council in a key position of influence in the decision-making process. With the sole exception of Saadoun Ghaydan, all five members of the RCC are concurrently members of the Regional Command of the Baath. Similarly, all members of the RCC, with the sole exception of Saddam Hussein Takriti, hold key portfolios in the current cabinet under the premiership of Bakr. This overlapping membership does not end at the RCC - Regional - Cabinet level. It continues on to the party bureaus, many of whose chairmen and vice chairmen hold dual or even triple memberships in the RCC, the Regional Command, and the cabinet.

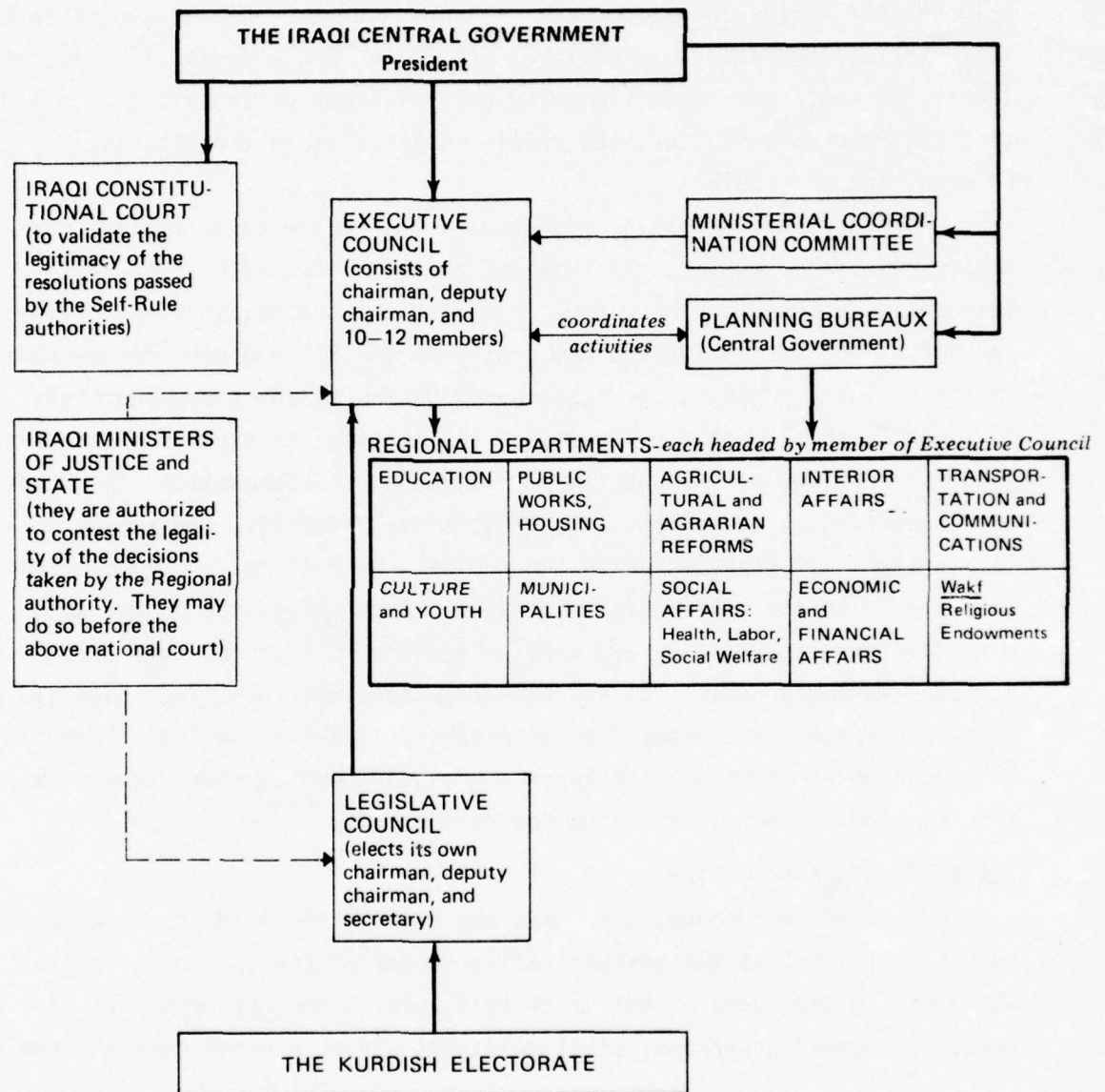
Although this mechanism has enabled the regime to maintain a firm control over the country, the same mechanism has caused serious rifts between the Baath and other competing political groups, such as the Kurds and the Communists who demand membership in the RCC and more responsibility in the Cabinet. Unless, the Baath party begins to admit non-Baathists to the RCC, the "opposition" parties will continue to express dissatisfaction with the workings of the government. Although the Communists, the Kurds, the Independent Nationalists, the Progressive Democrats, and the National Leaguers are all represented in the cabinet, none of these groups seems satisfied with the role assigned to them. Apparently, the Communists, more than any other group, are seeking a wider role in the country's decision-making process. It has been reported that the Iraqi Baathists were concerned about the changes that were taking place in the Iraqi Communist Party, which, recognizing the Baath's unwillingness to share power, was showing signs of detachment from the ruling party.⁸⁴

The Kurdish Autonomy Plan

The Kurdish autonomy plan that was promulgated in March 1974 declared the city of Irbil as the administrative center of the autonomous region. While giving the Kurds a modicum of self-rule in the northern part of Iraq, the Baghdad government still maintains strong control over the adminis-

⁸⁴*An Nahar*, Vol 5, No.46 (18 November 1974), p.4. For a different view see Ghazi al-Ayyash's views in *Al Anwar* (Beirut), 13 November 1974, as reported in FBIS (15 November 1974), p. E-1.

Figure 5. STRUCTURE OF THE KURDISH AUTONOMY PLAN



* Chairman is appointed by the President of the Republic from among the members of the Legislative Council. The Chairman in turn chooses members for the Executive Committee from among the Legislative Council. The Chairman and members of the Executive Council hold the rank of Minister. The President has the power to dismiss the Chairman, in such a case, the Executive Committee stands dissolved.

trative affairs of the region. Article 10 of the autonomy plan provides for an elected legislative council in the region, it defines its powers of legislation and the procedural aspects of its meetings. Among the powers given to the council are: legislative authority to make decisions "to develop the region and promote its social, cultural, constructional and economic utilities within the bounds of the state's general policy;" suggest budget for the region; and cast or withhold votes of confidence in the Executive Committee or in one or more of its members. "Anyone in [sic] whom confidence is withheld shall be relieved of his duty."⁸⁵

The Kurdish autonomy law further provides for an Executive Council empowered with administrative functions for the region. The law calls for a chairman, a deputy chairman, and 10-12 members of the Council. The president of the republic is empowered to appoint the chairman of the Council from among the elected members of the Legislative Council; the appointed chairman, in turn chooses his team from among the members of the Legislative Council. The president of the republic has the authority to dismiss the chairman of the Executive Council, and, in such a case, the entire Executive Council stands dissolved.

In the administration of the region, the Executive Council is provided with assistance from the national planning bureaus. The personnel of these bureaus and the Executive Council coordinate their developmental activities and they jointly supervise the activities of the regional departments. (See chart showing the structure of the Kurdish autonomy plan). Each member of the Executive Council is responsible for a regional department, and in this capacity, the supervising member is known as the secretary general.

Under this plan, the central government retains its power to issue directives to the regional administrative departments. The central government, through the ministers of justice and state, may contest the legality of the decisions taken by the regional autonomous authorities. Such a challenge must be made before the Iraqi Constitutional Court within 30 days of the passage of a resolution. The court must reach a decision within 30 days,

⁸⁵Article 10, paragraphs B, V, and J, as in FBIS (12 March 1974), pp. C-14-C-15.

and its decisions are irreversible.⁸⁶

From this brief treatment of the Kurdish autonomy plan, it should be evident that although the Kurds have been granted some autonomous powers, the financial, executive, and judicial powers are still very much in the hands of the Baathist regime in Baghdad.

Issue Areas

Following the pattern in the chapters on Egypt and Syria, we shall discuss four categories of issues that confront Iraq today. It should be noted that not all the categories discussed in the Egyptian chapter are relevant to this chapter. Therefore, only the most relevant will be treated here. These categories are: territorial issues, non-human resources, human resources, and status.

1. Territorial issues: This issue area may be divided into two parts -- national (Iraqi) and pan-Arab (territorial disputes involving other Arab States) issues. The national territorial issues are: the Shatt al-Arab conflict with Iran, a border dispute with Kuwait, and a border disagreement with Saudi Arabia. (Because the disagreement with Saudi Arabia is rather insignificant, involving a small neutral zone area between the two countries, we need not spend any time in discussing it. On the pan-Arab level, the territorial issues are: Palestine, the Sinai, the Golan Heights, the West Bank and Jerusalem, the three Iranian "occupied" islands in the Gulf, the Spanish Sahara, and the Spanish enclaves in Morocco.
2. Non human resources: Included in this category are the issues pertaining to economic and industrial development, foreign investment, oil, and international commerce and trade.
3. Human resources: This category includes such issues as education and training of the youth, the bureaucracy, business and military personnel.

⁸⁶Articles 18 and 19 as in FBIS (12 March 1974), pp. C-16-17.

4. Status: This category subsumes such intangible issues as national prestige, the Iraqi perceptions of the country's role in the Middle East, and its relations with the super powers.

Territorial Issues

Of the three national territorial issues confronting Iraq today, the conflict over Shatt Al-Arab(River of the Arabs) perhaps evokes the strongest reaction from Iraqi lenders because this dispute is no longer confined to the territorial and navigational claims and counter claims of the two disputants. It is now linked with the Kurdish revolt that is allegedly being supported by Iran, with the "ideological" battle between Baathist socialism" and the Iranian "capitalism," and with Iran's growing military strength which is being perceived by Baghdad as a potentially hegemonic force in the Persian Gulf.

The origin of the Shatt al-Arab dispute goes back to the period of the Ottoman Empire, which prior to World War I controlled both sides of the river.⁸⁷ As a successor state to the Ottoman Empire, Iraq claimed the same rights after it emerged as an independent state in 1932. After several years of negotiations in which the British reputedly urged Iran to concede the Iraqi demand, Tehran and Baghdad signed in 1937 a treaty which confirmed Iraqi sovereignty over that 100-mile stretch of Shatt al-Arab (the estuary of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers) which divides the two neighbors before emptying into the Gulf. Unlike most other international river treaties, this treaty gave Iraq the exclusive navigational rights up to the low-water mark on the Iranian side, rather than to the middle-stream point of the river. Excepted were the anchorage area at the Iranian ports of Abadan, Khorramshahr, and Khosrowabad, about 10 miles below Abadan where the borderline is moved to the center of the river.⁸⁸

⁸⁷Under a 1913 treaty between the Ottoman Empire and Persia, the latter country recognized Turkish sovereignty over the estuary up to the low-water mark on the Persian shore. *Keesing's*(April 9-16, 1960), p.17357

⁸⁸*Area Handbook for Iraq*, p. 213.

Relations between the Hashemite dynasty in Iraq and the Pehlavi dynasty in Iran remained friendly and cordial until 1958 when after the Qassem coup in Baghdad, the Iranian-Iraqi ties began to deteriorate. In December 1959, the Iraqi government questioned the validity of the 1937 treaty and asked Iran to return to Iraq all the roadsteads outside the Iranian ports of Abadan, Khorramshahr, and Khosrowabad on the Shatt al-Arab. Following minor border skirmishes, the Iranian government issued a statement in January 1960 in which Tehran charged Iraq with violating the treaty by its refusal to respond to repeated proposals for a joint committee to negotiate a settlement of the Shatt al-Arab; by using fees collected by the Basara Port Authority for purposes other than river development; and by inciting the Iraqi people against Iran. Based on these alleged violations of the treaty, the Iranian government declared that henceforth the Iraqi-Iranian border would be marked by the midway line at the deepest point of the navigable channel of the Shatt al-Arab.⁸⁹

During the next few years, Iraqi-Iranian relations remained tense, with the exception of the period when President Abdul Salam Arif (November 1963-April 1966) endeavored to settle the dispute by negotiations. After the July 1968 coup in Iraq, Hardan Takriti and President Bakr took diplomatic initiatives to reestablish cordial relations with Iran, which responded favorably to the Iraqi moves. A number of high-level visits were exchanged between the two countries and there were references in the media to the Iranian-Iranian-Iraqi honeymoon in the making. These expectations, however, proved premature.⁹⁰

After months of fruitless talks, Iran, alleging that Iraq had been in violation of the treaty for many years, denounced the 1937 agreement on April 19, 1969. The Iranian announcement further declared that the Iranian ships plying the Shatt al-Arab would no longer pay Iraqi tolls and would not fly the Iraqi flag as required by Iraqi laws. In turn, the Iraqi

⁸⁹ *Keesing's* (April 9-16, 1960), p. 17357.

⁹⁰ *Kayhan International* (9 December 1968) as in FBIS (18 December 1968), pp. C1-2.

government described Iran's abrogation of the treaty as a "unilateral action contravening the principles of international law." Baghdad reiterated its claim to the entire Shatt al-Arab as part of the territory of Iraq.⁹¹ Furthermore, Iraq warned that ships not complying with the Iraqi regulations would be stopped from entering Shatt al-Arab. To assert its claim on part of the Shatt, the Iranian government dispatched a cargo ship, with naval and air escort, through the estuary to the Persian Gulf. The ship arrived unmolested by the Iraqis who took no action despite their earlier threats. Since then, the Shatt al-Arab dispute between Iraq and Iran has been frozen, despite a number of efforts at mediation by third parties.

The Kurdish problem, allegedly encouraged by Tehran, and the Iranian occupation of the islands of Abu Musa, the greater and lesser Tumbs in 1971 exacerbated the already tense relations between Baghdad and Tehran.⁹² Defending its military action on the islands, Iran said that it had occupied them so as to safeguard the country's vital supply routes along which most of Iran's oil is exported. For this action, Iran was almost unanimously condemned by all Arab states, with Iraq taking the lead.⁹³ In retaliation for the Iranian occupation of the three islands, Iraq severed diplomatic ties with Iran and simultaneously called upon the U.N. Security Council to consider Iran's seizure of "foreign territory."⁹⁴

Since 1971, Iraqi-Iranian relations have not improved substantially, despite the mediation efforts reportedly made by the Soviet Union, Turkey, and Egypt. In their effort to resolve the Iraqi-Iranian dispute, the

⁹¹ *Keesing's* (August 30-September 6, 1969), p. 23544.

⁹² The two Tumbs are claimed by the emirate of Ras Al-Khaimah, they are barren and uninhabited. However, they are strategically located in the Strait of Hormuz at the entrance to the Gulf. Abu Musa is claimed by Sharja and is also strategically located in the Strait. In addition, Abu Musa has rich offshore oil deposits and mineral wealth on the island. Iran rejected those claims insisting that these islands were forcibly captured by Britain and later handed over by it to the Arab emirates.

⁹³ *An Nahar*, Vol. 2, no. 22 (31 May 1971), p. 4. See the relevant broadcasts in FBIS.

⁹⁴ On this occasion, Iraq also severed relations with Britain whom Baghdad accused of collaboration with Tehran. *The Washington Post* (2 December 1971), p. A-28.

diplomats of both countries have had a number of meetings at Ankara, Istanbul, and Geneva. Although these negotiators claimed that the talks had been "productive," the border tension along the Kurdish region does not seem to have eased.⁹⁵

The Iraqi claim on Kuwait has been another territorial issue responsible for occasional tension between Baghdad and Kuwait. The genesis of this dispute is based on Baghdad's claim that Kuwait was an integral part of Iraq under the Ottoman Empire and that as a successor to this empire, Iraq should inherit the oil-rich Sheikhdom that became independent of British rule in 1961. It was the announcement of the impending independence of Kuwait that prompted prime minister Qassem to claim Iraqi sovereignty over Kuwait on June 25, 1961, only six days after the Shaikhdom and Britain signed an agreement terminating the Anglo-Kuwait agreement of 1899 that had consecrated British hegemony over Kuwait. Qassem justified his claim over Kuwait on two counts: (1) that Kuwait was part of the province of Basra in the Ottoman Empire; and (2) that this fact had been recognized by Britain in the treaty of 1899.⁹⁶ This Iraqi claim was not only firmly rejected by Kuwait and Britain but also by all the Arab State, who immediately and unanimously admitted Kuwait to the League of Arab States, thus recognizing its sovereignty and independence.⁹⁷ Furthermore, on receiving a Kuwaiti request for military aid against the Iraqi threats, a number of Arab states provided military contingents which replaced the British expeditionary force that had landed soon after Qassem proclaimed Iraqi sovereignty over the Shaikhdom.⁹⁸

⁹⁵Press reports on the border clashes between the Iranian and Iraqi forces in the fall of 1974.

⁹⁶*Keesing's* (July 8-15, 1961), p. 18187.

⁹⁷The vote was recorded as unanimous because the Iraqi delegation had walked out of the League meeting held in Cairo on July 20, 1961. *Keesing's* (July 15-22, 1961), p. 18221.

⁹⁸On August 12, 1961, the ruler of Kuwait and the secretary general of the Arab League signed an agreement which bound the League (Iraq alone dissenting) "to preserve Kuwaiti territorial integrity and independence under its present regime; to regard any aggression against the Sheikhdom as aggression against the League's members and, in the event of any such aggression, to render Kuwait immediate assistance and, if necessary, repel it with armed force." *Keesing's* (October 7-14, 1961), p. 18355.

Realizing that no Arab or non-Arab state had supported Iraq's claim to Kuwait, Qassem turned to the Soviet Union to block Kuwait's admission to the United Nations. The resolution for Kuwait's membership, sponsored jointly by Britain and Egypt, was vetoed by the USSR on the ground that the Shaikhdum was still under the "tutelage" of Britain and thus did not qualify as an independent state to be admitted to the world body.⁹⁹ The unanimous Arab opposition and a 50-million dinar Kuwaiti loan to Iraq helped to diffuse the conflict which remained dormant until 11 December 1972 when a road-building crew, under the protection of an Iraqi military brigade, crossed the border and began to build a roads on Kuwaiti territorial leading to the Gulf. This time, Iraq justified "the troop concentrations" (of course, it did not admit a violation of Kuwaiti sovereignty) on the Kuwaiti border on the ground of "national defense" against a possible military threat from Iran. Once again, the leaders of the Arab states put pressure on Baghdad and urged it to back off from any planned confrontation with the Kuwaitis.

Hardly three months after the road-building incident, a contingent of Iraqi troops occupied a Kuwaiti police station near the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border at Samitah. During this incident, two Kuwaiti policemen were killed and four injured. This was the most violent confrontation between the two disputants since Kuwait became independant in 1961.

These incidents raise a number of questions about the Iraqi motives in creating an additional diplomatic headache for itself when Baghdad was already isolated in the region. Were these incidents created for economic reasons? Were they created for diplomatic reasons? Or were they created for strategic reasons? We are of the opinion that the road-building incident and the occupation of the police station at Samitah were related to Iraq's financial difficulties and to its desire to expand its narrow coastline at the expense of Kuwait. Since the nationalization of the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) in June 1972, the country had been faced with serious economic

⁹⁹ *Keessing's* (December 2-9, 1961), p. 18462. The Soviet veto was cast not so much to express Moscow's support to Iraq as it was to manifest the Kremlin's displeasure with Nasser with whom Khrushchev was not cordial during this episode. See McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *Soviet Union and the Middle East*, pp. 275-314.

problems; in November of that year, Iraq tried to obtain loans and grants from the Arab states whose foreign and defense ministers were meeting in Kuwait. However, in the face of Saudi opposition, Baghdad's efforts did not materialize. Although Kuwait provided a 5-million dinar loan, Iraq was evidently piqued by the treatment it received at the conference. Perhaps, it was in the hope of creating pressure on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to loosen their purse strings that Iraq created tension on the border with Kuwait. This episode also helped Iraq to focus Arab attention on Baghdad to which a number of Arab diplomats rushed to ease the tension between Iraq and Kuwait.

In addition to the meager financial assistance it received from Kuwait and the expanded diplomatic contact with other Arab states, Iraq seemed to have gained a Kuwaiti acquiescence to the use of Kuwait territory for Iraqi's strategic needs. Reportedly, Iraq wanted to acquire a strip of Kuwaiti territory along the coast including the two Kuwaiti islands of Warba and Bobyan. The purpose of this was to provide better protection to the new Iraqi deep sea port of Um Qasr where the Soviets were building a large naval base, and to protect the coast opposite Warba, the only navigable channel in the area.¹⁰⁰ Realizing the strategic importance to Iraq of the two islands and the Iraqi-built road, the Kuwaiti government was reportedly prepared to lease the territory around Samitah and the two islands to Iraq, provided Baghdad recognized Kuwaiti sovereignty over these parcels of land. In spite of high level discussions between Iraq and Kuwait, a permanent solution to the border problems has not yet been found.

On the pan-Arab level, the most important territorial issue for Iraq is that of Palestine, followed by the lands under Israeli occupation since June 1967. Iraq has persistently and unequivocally demanded a just solution to the Palestine problem. As a member of the Eastern front, Iraq participated in the June 1967 and the October 1973 Arab-Israeli wars. In addition, after the June war, Iraq maintained a sizable force in Jordan as an indication of Iraqi commitment to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

¹⁰⁰ *An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no.13 (26 March 1973), pp. 1-2; *An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no. 14 (2 April 1973). pp. 2-4; and *An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no. 35 (27 August 1973), pp.2-3.

Notwithstanding its support to the Palestinians at the international level, Iraq's relations with Palestinian representative bodies have not always been friendly. Both the internal conflicts in Iraq and Baghdad's isolation in the Arab world contributed to the creation of tension between the Palestinian commando groups and the Iraqi government. Internally, the Baath government was engaged in a military conflict with the Kurds; and its relations with the ICP had yet not improved. In other words, the Baath Regime enjoyed little public support from organized parties in the country. Externally, Iraq's relations with Syria and Egypt were not cordial and the Baghdad regime felt extremely insecure in its dealings with the Palestinian command organizations because of their contacts with the regime's internal and external enemies.

Prior to 1972, the only commando organization favored by the Baghdad regime was the Arab Liberation Front (ALF) that had been founded in April 1969 by the Baathists after their assumption of power in July 1968. The motive behind the creation of the ALF was to have an Iraqi counterpart to the Syrian-sponsored Saiqa. Although a number of other commando organizations welcomed the formation of the ALF, the latter's policy of not confining its membership to the Palestinians caused serious disagreements between it and other command organizations. The ALF believed that only through general Arab participation and mobilization would the Palestinians be able to achieve their political goals. In contrast, the other commando organizations rejected the principle of general Arab participation in their activities on the ground that such a participation would bring the resistance movement under the tutelage of Arab regimes.¹⁰¹ As a result of this policy, the AFL has more non-Palestinians than Palestinians among its rank and file. Consequently, the ALF has less influence in the resistance movement than its main competitor, the Saiqa.

Iraqi-Palestinian relations plummeted to a new low in September 1970 when the Iraqi army units stationed in Jordan refused to come to the aid of the commandos despite their urgent appeals for help. (For a discussion of this episode, as it related to the struggle for power in the RCC, see the section on the Baath in this chapter.) For the next 18 months, Iraqi-

¹⁰¹ Riad N. El-Rayyes and Dunia Nahas (eds), *Guerrillas for Palestine* (Beirut: An Nahar Arab Report, 1974), pp. 55-56.

Palestinian relations remained rather tense. The Iraqi government proceeded to impose further restrictions on the activities of the commandos and refused to pay the salaries of the Palestinian Qaddissiy h Brigade stationed in Iraq.

After mending its fences with the Iraqi Communists and the Kurds, the Baathist regime moved to effect a rapprochement with the Palestinians. With this view in mind, the RCC announced that Iraqi citizens employed by public and private institutions would be allowed to join the resistance without losing their rights and salaries as employees. Moreover, Palestinians would be given equal treatment in matter of employment, and Palestinian students would enjoy equal opportunities for scholarships.¹⁰² These and other changes announced by the RCC created a better understanding between Iraq and the resistance movement. The nationalization of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) in June 1972 raised the Baathist status with the commandos who "regarded the takeover as a revolutionary act to be supported without reservation."¹⁰³

This wholehearted support did not last beyond the end of the October 1973 War. Iraq's rejection of the U.S.-sponsored peace initiatives once again caused a split between Baghdad and the commandos' largest representative organization, the Fateh. This time, Iraq was supported by the PFLP and the PFLP-General Command, all of whom are opposed to the formation of a Palestine state in Gaza and the West Bank.

On other pan-Arab territorial issues, Iraq's support has been mostly verbal. In certain cases, however, Iraq has provided financial assistance to the Arab claimants to the land still under foreign occupation. This category includes such groups as the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰²Rayyes and Nahas, *Guerrillas*, p. 105.

¹⁰³Rayyes and Nahas, *Guerrillas*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁴Although ethnically the Eritreans are not Arabs, they have been "adopted" as such by most Arab States. Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, among others, have all expressed their firm support for the Front. See newspaper stories on the issue since the ELF escalated its activities on January 31, 1975.

Non-Human Resources

Although this category subsumes several issues, we shall focus on only two of them: (1) industrialization and economic development, and (2) oil. Other issues under this category, such as foreign investments and international commerce are subordinate subjects which fall under the economic and industrial policies of Iraq. The subordinate subjects, therefore, will not be discussed separately.

Traditionally, Iraq is an agricultural country, but during the last 50 years, most of its industrial development has been attributed not to funds earned by agricultural surpluses but rather to the revenues from oil, which accounts for one-fifth of the gross national product, four-fifths of the country's foreign exchange receipts, and two-thirds of the government's revenue. Because of its heavy dependence on oil revenues for development, Iraq's industrialization programs have fluctuated with the international oil market. In the early sixties, while Iraqi oil revenues were stagnant, the country's industrialization plans were, accordingly, kept at a level far below the country's developmental needs.¹⁰⁵ To be sure, the lack of availability of capital was only one of the problems Iraq faced in industrializing. Another important factor was, and still is, the shortage of trained personnel: technicians, engineers, and the like. Additionally, the attitudes of most Iraqi governments "toward successful industrialists have been ambivalent." The Iraqi governments, on the one hand, "favored industry for reasons of prestige; on the other, they have been suspicious of anyone who has made a profit."¹⁰⁶

Since its assumption of power in 1968 the Baath government has endeavored to increase the rate of industrial and economic growth in the country. Although the 1970-1974 national development plan did not achieve all its goals, it did enlarge the industrial base on which to construct future developmental projects. There were five major reasons for the plan's failure to meet its goals:

¹⁰⁵Europa, *Middle East 1974-75*, p.368.

¹⁰⁶Riggan Er-Rumi, "Iraq," *The Middle East: A Handbook*, edited by Michael Adams (New York: Praeger, 1971), p. 210.

1. lack of skilled labor and managerial personnel;
2. absence of entrepreneurial initiative;
3. a limited domestic market;
4. lack of export marketing channels for non-oil products; and
5. lack of diversification of manufactured goods.¹⁰⁷

A sharp increase in oil revenues has enabled Iraq to invest more in the industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy. This was reflected in the 1974-75 investment program that was launched on April 1, 1974. The appropriations for this one-year program is 1.1 billion dinars (100 Iraqi dinars = \$U.S. 337.78). This is almost four times more than the previous appropriation of 310 million dinars for 1973-74. In March 1974, a new five-year development plan, with a projected investment of about \$7,500 million, was launched. This amount will probably be revised upward as Iraq will receive higher revenues from oil sales than had been expected. Of this amount, ID225 million will be invested in industry and ID178 million in agriculture.¹⁰⁸

Although the Baath party professes a socialist ideology, it has not gone as far in enacting socialist decree as its neighbor, Syria, or its traditional rival, Egypt. Despite its militant rhetorics against capitalism, the Iraqi Baath has been encouraging private national and foreign investments in the country, where all fields of investment, other than strategic and heavy industries, are open to the private sector.¹⁰⁹

However, since there is no tradition of private investment in industry, the Iraqis have not shown willingness to invest in anything in which risk exists. Most of the people with savings, therefore, prefer to invest them in tangible assets where the risk is minimum. Therefore, most Iraqis with capital prefer to invest in agriculture and real estate.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷*The Arab Economist* (January 1974), p. 39.

¹⁰⁸FBIS (2 April 1974), p. E-3; Europa, *Middle East 1974-75*, p. 376.

¹⁰⁹Foreign capital can only participate in a joint venture with domestic capital holding at least 60 percent of the total shares.

¹¹⁰"Industrial Development and Legislation in Iraq." *The Arab Economist* (January 1974), p. 33.

In view of Iraq's considerable agricultural potential, the government itself is investing large sums of money and effort to develop the agricultural sector of the economy. The aim of the Iraqi government is to produce an agricultural surplus for export by reducing dependence on weather conditions and solving the salinity problems that affect irrigated land.

Oil has played a significant role not only in the industrial development of the country but also in Iraq's relations with a number of major foreign powers. Traditionally, Iraqi public sentiments have been against foreign oil concessions in the country. From the earliest days of its development, Iraqi "nationalism" focused its attention on the foreign oil concessions that had been awarded by the British mandatory power to the Iraqi Petroleum Company in 1925. Although the anti-oil-concession sentiments were high among both the general public and the Free officers, the Qassem regime rejected nationalization as impractical. The new regime, however, pressed for higher shares of oil profits. For a while relations between the oil companies and the revolutionary regime continued on friendly basis. But in 1961 their ties began to show serious strains because of their inability to reach a settlement on the issue of oil royalties. Consequently, the Iraqi government expropriated from the IPC all concessionary areas not yet under oil production. This action deprived the IPC and its affiliates of 99.5 percent of the area over which the oil conglomerate held prospecting rights under the agreements signed in the 1930s.¹¹¹

The crisis engendered by the rift between the IPC and the government seemed to have polarized Iraqi public opinion on the methods for settling the oil dispute. While one Iraqi group called for a negotiated settlement, the other insisted on confronting the oil companies with a *fait accompli* by nationalizing their assets in the country.¹¹² Caught between the nationalists pressure and technical and financial realities of oil politics, the Iraqi government enacted a law which it believed would satisfy the two "extreme groups" in the country. The new law authorized the state-owned Iraqi

¹¹¹Kimball, *Changing Pattern*, p. 130.

¹¹²Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, p. 292.

National Oil Company (INOC) to exploit all resources throughout the country except in the areas already being exploited by the IPC and its associates.¹¹³ This law broke the near monopoly of the IPC and opened the country to other foreign oil companies to compete for concessions in Iraq.

Despite the IPC efforts at the international level to discourage other companies from entering the Iraqi market, several oil companies expressed willingness to invest capital in prospecting for oil in Iraq. One of the first new oil concessionaries was the French state-owned group of companies, *Entreprise de Recherches et d'Activites Petrolieres* (ERAP). This agreement did not give the French organization co-ownership rights over future oil discoveries. The ERAP became a contractor under the INOC, which held all proprietary rights pertaining to oil and installations to be constructed in Iraq. However, the agreement provided that the French agency would receive from the INOC 50 percent of the oil discovered in commercial quantities.¹¹⁴

Soon thereafter, the Soviet Union expressed its willingness to enter into an agreement with the INOC for oil prospecting and exploitation. On December 24, 1967, the Soviet Union agreed to aid the INOC in the exploitation, transportation, and marketing of oil. Through mutual consultations and negotiations, Moscow and Baghdad agreed to focus their attention on the oil-rich Rumeila field in South Iraq. This understanding, however, did not materialize because the INOC decided to exclude both the French and the Russians from the Rumeila field. Instead, the INOC acquired Soviet loans totalling \$72 million to develop the North Rumeila fields. In addition to the Russian loans, Iraq also received promises from the Soviet Union and its East European allies for technical cooperation in drilling oil wells, constructing pipelines and building port facilities for oil tankers in the Persian Gulf.¹¹⁵

Although by April 1972, the North Rumeila field had started to produce oil in commercial quantities, the Iraqi government still received a major portion of its oil income from the Western oil companies operating in the country. In early 1972, either for purely commercial reasons, (as the IPC and its affiliates claimed) or for putting financial pressure on the government

¹¹³Kimball, *Changing Pattern*, pp. 134-135. This new law was passed on August 6, 1967.

¹¹⁴Kimbal, *Changing Pattern*, p. 137.

¹¹⁵John K. Cooley, "Kosygin visit linked to cloudy Iraqi scene," *The Christian Science Monitor* (7 April 1972), p. 2.

(as the Iraqi regime perceived), the Western oil companies began to cut oil production in Iraq. This action of the oil companies caused an irreparable rift between them and the Baathist regime, which on June 1, 1972, announced the nationalization of all IPC assets in Iraq.¹¹⁶

The nationalization of the IPC was one of the major achievements of the Baathist government since it came to power in 1968. It was a major achievement because several previous governments had not been able to establish a viable relationship with the foreign oil companies whose monopolistic control of the oil industry in the country could not be prudently broken under the existing circumstances. Furthermore, the oil transportation and distribution systems were owned and operated by the oil companies who could conveniently defeat the Iraqi efforts to sell oil independently, if Iraq had tried to nationalize the oil industry in the past. In addition, Iraq did not have adequate manpower to administer the oil industry, despite the fact that it possessed one of the largest pools of trained oil technicians in the Arab world.

However, by mid 1972, both domestic and international factors had begun to change in Iraq's favor. To begin with, the Arab world had become more conscious of its strategic importance to the industrialized world, and furthermore, the Arabs had come to realize that existing world conditions would not permit any single bloc of powers to establish its hegemony over the region; therefore, the Arab governments were able to take bolder political decisions than were thought possible in the 1950s or early 1960s.

Secondly, notwithstanding the internal dissension among the Arab states, they had on occasion begun to cooperate at the international level. This cooperation was especially significant in oil negotiations with the foreign corporations and in providing financial aid to the needy members of the League of Arab states. This was manifested in the oil nationalization decision of 1972, when Iraq was unanimously supported by the Arab states;

¹¹⁶In 1970, the joint production of crude by the IPC, Basra Petroleum, and Mosul Petroleum was 75,241,000 long tons; in 1971, they produced 82,500,000 long tons, and in 1972, the production dropped to 69,000,880 long tons. In 1973, after nationalization, the Iraqi oil production jumped to 92 million tons. This total included 10 million tons from the North Rumeila field. *Europa Middle East 1974-75*, pp. 371-378. On April 7, 1974, Saadoun Hammadi inaugurated the second stage of the Rumeila Oil field. On this occasion, the Iraqi minister for oil said that the production capacity of this oil field would be increased to 40 million tons annually, during the third stage of the project. He did not say when the third stage would start or end. FBIS (5 April 1974), pp. A-1-A-2.

and Kuwait, despite the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border rift, offered to provide financial aid to Baghdad so as to keep the Baathist regime from cracking under pressure from the oil companies.¹¹⁷

Thirdly, prior to the nationalization decision, the Baath regime had succeeded in training larger numbers of technicians and managerial personnel, and it had made arrangements to sell oil directly to a number of European, Asian, and African States. Even the previously crucial factor of oil tankers was no longer a serious consideration in making the nationalization decision: The Soviet Union had agreed to lease tankers to the INOC, and Spain had clearly agreed to build seven 35,000-ton tankers.¹¹⁸

The IPC nationalization crisis had hardly subsided when the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war broke out. Accusing the United States of collaboration with Israel, the Iraqi government nationalized the assets of Exxon and Mobil, the two U.S. companies that had held a joint 23.75 percent share in the Basrah Petroleum Company. The Iraqi nationalization decree, issued on the second day of the war, said that the Iraqi action was being taken "in conformity with an undertaking to use oil as a political weapon to face the escalation of the Zionist and U.S. imperialist aggression against the Arab nation."¹¹⁹ Two weeks later, on October 21, the RCC nationalized all Dutch interests in the Basrah Oil Company. On this occasion, the Iraqi government

¹¹⁷Phebe Marr, "Iraq Puts Oil Politics on Trial," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10 July 1972; according to *An Nahar* Vol. 5, no. 45 (11 November 1974), Iraq was given a £53 million loan during the nationalization crisis that lasted until February 1973 when the Oil Company accepted a negotiated settlement to its claims. Under the settlement, the IPC was given 15 million tons of crude, to be loaded at Eastern Mediterranean ports, free of all charges. On its part, the IPC conceded the loss of its Kirkuk oil fields, waved its objections to the 1961 seizure of the Rumeila fields, and agreed to pay the Iraqi government £141 million as settlement of all Iraqi claims on the corporation. *Europa, Middle East* 1974-75, p. 373.

¹¹⁸*An Nahar*, Vol. 3, no. 2 (10 January 1972), n.p. Prior to the Nationalization of the IPC, Iraq had made arrangements, among others, with Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia to deliver 17 million tons of crude annually. At the time, Yugoslavia had agreed to build a 250-mile pipeline from the Adriatic coast to Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Recently, Iraq announced that it would partially finance the pipeline, which is scheduled to be finished by the end of 1975. The text of the Iraqi-IPC Agreement may be found in *An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no. 12 (19 March 1973), n.p.

¹¹⁹*An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no. 43 (22 October 1973), n.p.

said that the nationalization measure was designed to "punish Holland 'for its hostile attitude to the Arab nation and to the struggle of our people'." ¹²⁰

While Iraq claimed that its nationalization actions were in accord with an "understanding to use oil as a political weapon," Baghdad not only did not accept a unanimous Arab decision to reduce oil production; it actually raised it. In this action, the Iraqi government apparently found no logical contradiction. Dr. Saadoun Hammadi, minister of oil and minerals, defended Iraq's action by pointing out that as a political weapon oil should be used against the enemy only; and that the countries which had always stood by the Arabs should not be punished along with the enemies of the Arabs. Chiding the Arab critics of Iraqi oil policy, Hammadi challenged the Arab oil producers to match Iraq's performance by nationalizing U.S. oil interests, by withdrawing deposits from American banks, and by breaking off diplomatic relations with Washington. ¹²¹

Notwithstanding the stated Iraqi reasons for not joining the oil boycott, it is contended that the Iraqis had no choice but to continue to produce and sell oil to meet the heavy foreign exchange needs of their development projects. In addition, the INOC had signed agreements with a number of foreign states and as a new oil actor anxious to establish credibility, it did not want to falter from its commitments to the buyers.

In conclusion it may be stated that although oil will continue to play its traditional role as the financial source of Iraq's industrialization, oil has been and will be used for achieving political as well as economic goals of the country. This means that in signing long-term agreements for oil, a commodity that is becoming gradually scarce, Iraq will expect not just the financial returns due it but will insist on some additional benefits either political or technological. In other words, the

¹²⁰ *An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no. 45 (5 November 1973), n.p.

¹²¹ *An Nahar*, Vol. 4, no. 53 (31 December 1973), n.p. Iraq boycotted the meeting of the Arab oil ministers who met in Kuwait to consider sanctions against the United States and other friends of Israel. While this conference was being held, Dr. Rashid Rifai, the Iraqi minister of communications and acting minister of defense, reiterated his country's opposition to cutting back oil production. Repeating the points made earlier by Hammadi, Rifai urged other Arab oil producers to nationalize the U.S. oil assets, to withdraw deposits from American banks, and to sever relations with it. *The Arab World* (28 December 1973), p. 10.

future oil negotiations between Iraq and industrialized states will most probably deal as much with oil prices and oil quantities as with Iraq's industrial and development needs. Those industrialized states, which cannot or will not offer a political *quid pro quo* for guaranteed oil supplies, must then be prepared to offer Iraq the technology and manpower it urgently needs to expand the country's industrial base. Iraq's Minister of Oil, Saadoun Hammadi, has succinctly stated his country's policy in these words: "Iraq, a developing and oil-rich country, is not interested only in money, but also in know-how (expertise and technological assistance) which would increase the rate of development."¹²²

Human Resources

While the issues subsumed under the issue area "Human Resources" in the chapter on Egypt were occasionally discussed from a variety of ideological perspectives, the Human Resources issue area in this chapter on Iraq will not necessitate the same type of discussion because Iraq does not seem to have experienced a like debate on such issues as what type education and training was to be provided to the military and civilian personnel.¹²³

Moreover, unlike Egypt, where the university and highschool students have occasionally participated in anti-government riots, the Iraqi regime has not faced similar challenges to its educational or training policies. This apparent docility of the Iraqi students may be attributed to the firm control the Baath party maintains on the country's campuses or to the lack of ethnic and religious cohesion that prevents the students from forming

¹²²*The Arab World* (18 December 1973), p. 5.

¹²³We have used the word "seem" advisedly because we are not sure whether the apparent lack of controversy among the Iraqis is due to the press restrictions in the country which prevents the opposition from expressing its views or is it because of our inability to acquire first hand information on the subject. The Western and Arab sources we have consulted during the past several months show little indication of the existence of the ideological or other differences on these subjects.

a "united front" against the authorities. Our assumption is that the Iraqi students associate themselves more with ethnic or ideological group than with purely student-type organizations. Those who are active in the latter category are probably not keenly interested in the political and ideological questions in the country. Those active in the former category -- ethnic or ideological -- manifest their opinions through the KDP, the KRP, the Baath, or the Communist Party of Iraq.

Similarly, the question of military training has not caused any serious disagreements among the Iraqi decision-makers, although press rumors indicated that a group of unnamed officers were opposed to Iraq's total dependence on the Soviet Union for training and materiel. Once again a contrast with the Egyptian situation is revealing; unlike the Egyptian military officers corps, the Iraqi officers' corps (under the Baathist regime) does not seem to have formed anti- or pro-Soviet pressure groups. In fact, ever since Saddam Hussein "succeeded in subordinating" the military to the civilian control, the Iraqi military officers have not publicly expressed opinions on matters relating to Iraq's relations with the great powers.¹²⁴

Status

Before the Persian Gulf became one of the most important strategic areas in the world, the Iraqi regional policies were concerned with issues related to Palestine and relations with Syria and Egypt. Now, however, the Iraqi focus has shifted to its south and southeastern borders toward the Persian Gulf.¹²⁵ The Iraqis perceive their role as the strongest Arab rival of Iran for influence in the Persian Gulf. Although it has the smallest coastline on the Gulf, the Iraqi claim to leadership is based on its over 10 million population, agricultural potential, and its very substantial oil reserves.¹²⁶ This change in Iraq's foreign policy focus has caused consternation in Kuwait with which Baghdad has a border dispute and in Saudi Arabia, which is apprehensive about the Baathist rhetorics against the monarchist regimes.

¹²⁴This statement is based on our perusal of such reliable sources as *An Nahar Arab Report*, *The Arab World*, *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, and newspaper and journals emanating from the Middle East.

¹²⁵Dana Adams Schmidt, *Armageddon in the Middle East* (New York:John Day, 1974), p.86.

¹²⁶Total arable area in Iraq is over 14 million acres, in Egypt it is

On its part, Iran looks at Iraq as a Soviet strategic base in the Persian Gulf from where Tehran is endeavoring to keep out the rival super and great powers. To meet the Iraqi challenge, Iran is trying to keep Iraq isolated from its Arab neighbors, all of whom--Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia--are currently in a state of tension with Baghdad. Iran has improved ties with Syria; Tehran's relations with Jordan are excellent; Iran's ties with Saudi Arabia are cordial; and Iran's relations with Egypt have never been better in recent years. In this struggle for influence in the Persian Gulf, Kuwait has remained neutral, although its territorial conflict with Iraq has constrained it to strengthen the Kuwaiti armed forces.¹²⁷

The Iraqi-Iranian competition does not end with their rivalries in the five countries mentioned above. This competition assumes a more violent aspect in the Trucial coast Emirates and other small independent states on the Arabian Peninsula--the United Arab Emirates with its components, and Qatar. Iraq is reportedly supporting the Dhofar rebellion against the Sultan of Oman, who is being helped by a number of states and especially Iran, whose heavily armed military units and air force have been aiding the Omani military in its 10-year old effort to quash the rebellion.

In addition to the financial and materiel support that Iraq is providing to the Omani rebels, Baghdad is also endeavoring to establish its political and economic presence on the Arab coast of the Persian Gulf. Iraqi trade centers and insurance companies have been established in Kuwait, Bahran, and Abu Dhabi; and Iraqi scholarships have been provided to students from these countries. Additionally, the Iraqi regime has been reportedly encouraging the local Baathists to set up party cells in Kuwait, the UAE, and other areas in the Gulf.¹²⁸

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Since its independence, Iraq has had a series of monarchist and revolutionary governments whose domestic and foreign policy goals have not

¹²⁶ contd. six million acres; in Iran, 48 million acres; and in Syria, 17 million acres.

¹²⁷ Jim Hoagland, "India Enters Gulf Rivalry, Trains Iraqis," *The Washington Post* (22 June 1973), p. A-18.

¹²⁸ *An Nahar*, Vol. 1, no. 26 (31 August 1970), pp. 3-4.

differed radically from each other. Since all these governments were confronted by practically the same sets of problems, the goals pursued by the individual governments did not differ substantially; only in the formulation and implementation of their policies might they be considered different from each other. Since the July 1958 Revolution, Iraq has pursued the following major goals:

- To maintain its political independence and territorial integrity.
- To develop a sense of national unity among the diverse ethnic, religious, ecological, and other groups.
- To participate in Arab unity efforts.
- To maintain cordial relations with regional powers, especially Turkey.
- To accelerate the country's economic and industrial development.
- To maintain good relations with at least one superpower.
- To assert Iraq's leadership in the Eastern Arab world.

Political Programs

Since the political aspect of Iraqi policy has already been covered in the section on "the Policy-making Environment" that dealt with the ethnic, religious, and ideological conflicts in the country, there is no reason to repeat the substance of this discussion. However, we should like to recapitulate the highlights of our previous analysis.

Although Iraq's domestic political goals have not altered significantly since the revolution of 1958, the present Baath regime's policies, in respect to such issues as oil and the Kurds, have changed perceptibly. This government, though still plagued by the Barzani faction, has granted wider autonomy to the Kurds than any previous Iraqi government. For the first time in 16 years, a Kurd has been appointed vice president of the republic, a ceremonial office that is also considered to be "prestigious" by the Iraqi masses.

In addition, the Iraqi regime has followed a policy of reconciliation with the Communists who, only a few years ago, were thought to be the worst enemies of the Baath Party. This policy of reconciliation has been encouraged by Iraq's patron, the Soviet Union, which seems to have found in Iraq a countervailing force against Egypt and a willing ally in the strategic Persian Gulf.

As a result of a "settlement" with the Kurds and a reconciliation with the Communists and other amenable forces in the country, the Iraqi government has succeeded in forming a long-sought united front that purports to project a spirit of national unity among the diverse ethnic and ideological groups.

On the regional level, Iraqi policies have not been too successful in extending the country's political influence. With the exception of a rapprochement between Baghdad and Cairo, and the continued cordial relations with Turkey, Iraq has been unable to break out of the isolation that the country's policies have created for it. These policies have failed because they seem to be in direct conflict with general political trends in the area. For example, most Arabs, following an Egyptian decision to seek a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute, are supporting the current U.S. efforts toward this goal. Iraq, on the contrary, has rejected this approach and is now practically the only state in the region that supports the "rejection front," formed by a coalition of the Palestinian commando groups. Since Iraq has usually found itself competing with Egypt for political influence, it is natural that Iraq should go against the tide; this is perhaps the only way for Baghdad to assert itself as a leader of the Arab world.

At the systemic level, Iraqi policies have achieved a number of significant objectives. Perhaps the most important being the nationalization of the IPC and a number of other oil companies. This was done with the cooperation of the Soviet Union, France, Turkey, Japan, India, and several other European, Asian, and African states. This cooperation was manifested in the form of technical and financial aid from the Soviet Union and its East European allies; technical and financial support from France; and political support from a number of states who showed willingness to purchase oil produced from the nationalized, but still disputed, fields. Other significant achievements at this level were in the area of military hardware and military training programs. Although the Soviet Union has supplied a substantial amount of sophisticated weapons to Iraq, it is by no means the sole source of Iraqi armaments. Since 1968, Iraq has been diversifying its sources of weapons acquisition and has purchased

from France small quantities of armored cars, helicopters, small arms, and ammunition.¹²⁹

During this period no significant changes occurred in Iraqi-U.S. relations; diplomatic ties, which were broken at the beginning of hostilities between the Arabs and the Israelis in June 1967, remain severed at the time of this writing (February 1975). After the diplomatic ties were severed, Iraq maintained a team of diplomats in the Indian Embassy in Washington. The U.S., however, chose not to exercise this option until July 1972, when two American diplomats were sent to Baghdad to look after U.S. interests in Iraq.¹³⁰

Notwithstanding the strained diplomatic relations between Washington and Baghdad, Iraq has in recent months expanded its business contacts with several U.S. corporations that are currently engaged in building port facilities and irrigation projects in the country.¹³¹

Military Programs

First as an ally of Britain and later as a member of the Baghdad Pact, Iraq received sufficient amounts of military hardware from Western sources; and all Iraqi military personnel were trained by either British or American instructors. The July 1958 revolution, however, changed this relationship radically. Because of its departure from the Baghdad Pact, Iraq could no longer qualify to receive arms supplies from its traditional sources of weapons acquisition. This Western reluctance to continue arms supplies to Iraq constrained the Qassem regime to enter into an arms agreement with the Soviet Union, and the first consignment of Soviet weapons arrived on November 27, 1958. The Soviet-Iraqi agreement provided for materiel and training of the Iraqi personnel by Soviet instructors. The first Soviet shipment included MIG-17s, Yak-11s, and IL-28s, motor boats, and light and

¹²⁹Because of France's interest in Iraqi oil and sulphur, Paris lifted the arms embargo in Iraq on December 6, 1967. In April 1968, negotiations for the Iraqi purchase of 54 Mirages were completed but the agreement was never consummated because the Iraqis decided to exclude all foreign interests from the North Rumeila oil field in which both France and the Soviet Union had expressed a keen interest. (See the section on oil.) Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). *The Arms Trade With the Third World* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1971), p. 588.

¹³⁰Marilyn Berger, "U.S. Is Sending Diplomats To Iraq, First Since 1967," *The Washington Post*, July 28, 1972, p. A-28.

¹³¹*The Arab World* (12 October 1973), p. 9.

heavy tanks. Two Soviet advisory teams were stationed in Baghdad and 40 Iraqi military cadets were sent for training in the Soviet Union.¹³²

In 1960, Soviet-Iraqi relations were strained because of Qassem's rift with the Iraqi Communists who tried to expand their activities against the wishes of the regime. Although this rift did not cause the termination of Soviet military supplies, it did constrain Qassem to buy new weapons from Britain. Realizing that a complete cut-off of weapons supply to Iraq would almost certainly force Iraq to reestablish military relations with the West, the Soviet Union maintained its supply of weapons to the Qassem regime, which was engaged not only in anti-Communist activities but also in fighting the Kurds who had traditionally been supported by Moscow. (For details, see the section on the Kurds above.)

After the over throw of the Qassem regime, the new junta under Bakr and Arif became militantly anti-Communist and began to change its military orientation from the Soviet Union to the West. Two months after it came to power in February 1963, the new Iraqi regime signed a military agreement with Britain under which London agreed to sell a number of saracen armoured personnel carriers and medium artillery ammunition. The Soviet Union suspended its aid program and consequently withdrew Soviet technicians from Iraq. On its part, Iraq withdrew the 69 airforce cadets who were being trained in the Soviet Union and sent most of them to Britain for training.

The dismissal of the Baathists from the Iraqi government in November 1963 improved Iraqi-Soviet relations and Moscow resumed arms supplies to Iraq. Baghdad also continued to purchase planes, tanks, and other materiel from Britain, which, in 1964, shipped to Iraq a number of Hunters and Jet Provosts. In the same year, Iraq and the Soviet Union entered into a new military aid agreement that provided for the supply of jet fighters and trainers, heavy and light tanks, automatic weapons, ammunition, spare parts, and five arms and ammunition factories. Supplies of Soviet equipment were reportedly halted in early 1967 because an Iraqi pilot had defected to Israel in a MIG-21.¹³³

After the June 1967 war in which it lost over 20 aircraft on the ground, Iraq expressed interest in acquiring the French Mirage. In 1968,

¹³²SIPRI, *Arms Trade*, pp. 555-556

¹³³SIPRI, *Arms Trade*, p. 557; 50 Hunter Mark 9 ground attack and 20 T-52 jet Provost light-strike planes, Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1967-1968* (London, 1967), p. 39.

the French government, which was keen to acquire oil exploitation rights in the North Rumeila fields, expressed willingness to sell 54 Mirages to the Aref regime. This agreement, however, was not consummated because, after the overthrow of the Arif regime in July 1968, the new Iraqi government decided not to allow foreign participation in the exploitation of the Rumeila oilfields. Nevertheless, the new Iraqi regime did buy a number of French armoured cars and Alouette helicopters.

Although the new Iraqi government was dominated by the Baathists, its relations with the Soviet Union began on the basis of cordiality and understanding. Consequently, Baghdad's military programs once again reflected this improved relationship in the form of expanded Soviet military aid programs for the Iraqi armed forces. In May 1969, the Iraqi-Soviet governments signed a new military aid agreement under which 15 MIGs and 20 SU-7s were immediately delivered to Iraq. In addition to this, 10 more SU-7 all-weather fighter-bombers and 150 T-54/55 tanks were received by Iraq from the Soviet Union during the next year. During 1971-1972, Iraq received from the USSR over 200 more T-54/55 heavy tanks, one TU-16 medium bomber, 2 IL-28 light bombers, and 25 MID-21 interceptors. Furthermore, the Iraqi armed forces enlarged their personnel strength by 10,000, bringing the total to a new high of 105,000.

Soviet-Iraqi military cooperation was further increased after the two countries signed a 15-year treaty of friendship and cooperation on April 9, 1972. Since then, the Iraqi government has received large quantities of Soviet weapons, including an undisclosed number of T-62 tanks with 115 mm guns and night-vision equipment, 10 MIG-21s, and the FROG surface-to-surface missile.¹³⁴

An analysis of the Iraqi defense budgets between 1963 and 1973 shows that Baghdad has been increasing its budget steadily. With the exception of three significant jumps in 1968, 1971, and 1973, Iraq has not increased its defense budget as rapidly as its Persian Gulf competitor, Iran. The primary reasons for these exceptional increases were the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, and the rapid expansion of the Iranian military forces that are

¹³⁴ According to *The Military Balance 1971-1972*, p. 28, the Iraqi army had 800 T-54/55 tanks in 1970-71; the same source (1974-75) tells us that by the end of 1974, Iraq's tank strength had increased to 1,300--this total included T-62, T-54/55, and 90 T-34 medium and PT-76 light tanks. This means that the main increase was in the numbers of heavy tanks: T-62S, T-54S, and T-55S.

acquiring huge quantities of weapons from a variety of Western sources. In terms of the total defense expenditure during these three years, Iraq increased its 1968 defense budget from \$235.2 million* to \$310.8 million, a jump of \$75.6 million. Out of the total defense budget for 1968, \$133.0 million were spent on importing new weapons. Since proportionally the import figures are high when compared to the total defense budget, we assume that the import figures include expenditure from the development (capital) budget, which is usually not reflected in the ordinary budget. In 1971, there was another increase of \$99.1 million in the defense budget, which increased from \$403.25 million (in 1970) to \$491.43 million. This time, however, only \$35.0 million were spent on weapons acquisition. Perhaps the main reason for this decrease in weapons imports was Iraq's stagnant economy caused by the reduction of oil production by the IPC.

The third big increase occurred in 1973 when Iraq allocated \$558.1 million (\$83.8 million more than the previous year) for defense. During the same year, Baghdad purchased from abroad weapons systems worth \$306 million, the highest amount ever spent by Iraq on this category. This increase is reflected in the figures given for Iraq in *The Military Balance 1974-1975*. It should be noted that Iraq had committed this large amount for weapons before the sudden increase in oil prices in early 1974.

This analysis further indicates that between 1963 and 1973, Iraq spent a total of \$874 million on importing weapons from a variety of sources. Of this amount, \$742 million went to the Soviet Union, \$77 million of Czechoslovakia, \$18 million to the United States, \$15 million to the United Kingdom, \$7 million to France, \$5 million to the Federal Republic of Germany, \$3 million to Poland, and \$7 million to all other countries.¹³⁵

*The conversions are in 1975 dollars.

¹³⁵The statistical information given above was gathered from a number of sources including *The Military Balance*; and U.S. Arms control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Trade 1963-1973* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975).

Economic and Social Programs

As indicated earlier, Iraq's development plans have depended almost exclusively on oil revenues which since the end of World War II had been expanding at a gradual rate until 1972 when, after the nationalization of the IPC, the country's oil income nearly doubled. Since early 1974, Iraq's oil income has jumped from \$600 million in 1972 to an estimated total of \$7.6 billion.¹³⁶ Cognizant of the finiteness of this natural asset, the Iraqi government has been endeavoring to invest the oil income in enterprises that would yield continuing profits beyond the end of the oil era in the country. This has been the explicit policy of all Iraqi governments for the last 30 years.¹³⁷

Since 1951, successive Iraqi governments have formulated a series of economic development plans, none of which accomplished the goals established for it. Badre points out that on the average, none of the Iraqi five-year development plans survived more than two years. The reason for this low average was not financial, but political and technical. Political instability and lack of trained manpower have been the primary causes of the past failures.

Not to be deterred by these failures, the new Baath government launched yet another five-year plan (1970/71 to fiscal 1974/75) that would cost 973 million dinars by the time the plan terminates. Of this sum, 690 would be invested by the public and 283 dinars by the private sectors. The breakdown of total outlays by the public sector shows that agriculture would receive 41 percent; industry, 35 percent; transportation and communications; 12 percent; and building and housing, 12 percent. Recognizing the importance of agriculture and industry to the country, the new plan allocated 16 percent more money to agriculture (it had received 25 percent in the 1965-1970 plan, the total cost of which was 820 million dinars); and 7 percent more to industry. Housing and building as well as transportation and communications were down-

¹³⁶John K. Cooley, "Iraq to Double Oil Income," *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 24, 1971, p. 8; *Time* (6 January 1975), p. 26.

¹³⁷Albert Y. Badre, "Economic Development of Iraq," Chapter 6, *Economic Development and Population Growth in the Middle East*, edited by Charles A. Cooper and Sidney S. Alexander (New York: Elsevier, 1972), p. 284.

graded in the 1970-75 plan; the housing and building sector that in the previous plan had been allocated 20 percent, received only 12 percent in the new plan; and similarly, the transportation and communications sector received 4 percent less money than in the previous plan. This clearly shows the direction in which the new government wished to move the country economically and socially.

In spite of housing shortages and an inadequate transportation and communications systems, the new regime preferred to invest more in agriculture and industry. Of course, the agricultural sector is extremely important to Iraq, not just because it produces food for the country, but also because a very large proportion of Iraq's population depends for its livelihood directly on the land. Most of the investment allocations for agriculture were for infrastructure: irrigation, drainage, land reclamation, storage, and fertilizers. Most of the outlays for industry would be directed, at least in the initial stages of the plan, to complete projects in process and to upgrade the efficiency of industrial management.¹³⁸

In April 1974, the Iraqi government announced the country's annual budget which, at ID 2,933,458,195, was twice as large as the 1973 budget. Besides being impressive in its magnitude, the new budget, announced several new plans that would be of immediate benefit to the Iraqi people. For example, the government has offered to qualified persons bank loans of up to ID 3,000 at nominal interest toward buying a house or apartment. And with a view to lower consumer goods prices, the government has lifted or has eased a number of restrictions on foreign trade. This action has brought down prices of a wide range of foreign goods available in Iraq.

Both the annual budget and the 1974-1979 development plan reflect the government's heavy emphasis on industry. Although agriculture continues to receive a significant portion of the allocations, industrial development clearly has become the number one priority of the Baghdad regime. In the

¹³⁸Smith, *Area Handbook for Iraq*, p. XXIVVV. In 1965, 42 percent of the total labor force in Iraq was employed in the agricultural sector; in 1970, 47 percent was engaged in this sector. In 1965, agriculture contributed 19 percent to the gross domestic product; in 1969, its share was 18 percent. *Middle East Journal* (Autumn 1974), p. 392.

previous budgetary year, the industrial sector had received only ID 45 million.¹³⁹ Similarly, in the 1974 budget agriculture has received ID 190 million, an amount ID 12 million larger than this sector was allocated in the 1974-79 plan. Other key sectors of the economy were also provided with larger sums than they had received in any previous plan or annual budget. In 1974 alone Iraq intended to spend ID 120 million on transportation (ID 35 million in 1973), and ID 175 million on construction and services (ID 35 million in 1973). As a consequence of these large outlays on development projects, Iraq, during 1974-75, will import goods and services worth ID 1,134 million, as compared with ID 415 million in 1973-1974.

Realizing that the previous plans had failed primarily due to a shortage of trained personnel (as well as to political instability), the Iraqi government has issued a law designed to attract expatriate Iraqi back to work in the country. This law, issued in November 1974, offers attractive terms to both Iraqi and Arab nationals who may wish to work in Iraq. Among the incentives being offered to educated, skilled, and trained prospective employees are: paid travel for them and their families, the right to bring duty free cars with them, a loan equal to six months' salary to be repaid in five years time, the option to buy land at a reduced rate and another option on a ID 4,000 loan for that purpose, and exemption from military service. In pursuit of this policy, the Iraqi government has sent abroad several high-level delegates to encourage qualified Iraqis and Arab nationals to return to Iraq and to participate in the development activities of the country. In addition, to stem the Iraqi "brain drain" the RCC passed a law that guarantees a government job for any and all high school and university graduates who may wish to work for the government.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ The figures for the 1974-1971 plan are from *Europa, Middle East* 1974-75, p. 376; and the figures for the Iraqi 1974 budget are from *An Nahar*, Vol. 5, no. 15 (15 April 1974), n.p. The plan figures are low perhaps because the plan was prepared before oil price increase came into effect.

¹⁴⁰ *An Nahar*, Vol. 6, no. 7 (17 February 1975), n.p. This law was passed in early February 1975. It should be noted that Iraq faces a shortage not only of skilled and trained workers but also of unskilled manual labor.

Although the Soviet Union will continue for the foreseeable future to play a significant role in Iraqi economic development plans, Iraq is by no means completely dependent on Moscow either for technical aid or for the importation of machinery. During the last two years or so, Iraq has entered into a number of technical and economic agreements with Japan, France, and several other European countries. In addition, Iraq has increased the volume of trade with the United States and during January-October 1974, Iraq imported \$210.8 million worth of U.S. goods, as compared with \$34.4 during the same period in 1973.¹⁴¹ This means that, for economic development, Iraq is not as dependent on the Soviet Union as Egypt had been before July 1972.

¹⁴¹These figures were provided by the U.S. Department Commerce, November 8, 1974.

CHAPTER FOUR. SYRIAN INTERESTS AND POLICIES

SYRIAN POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Syrian politics derive from an environmental complex of political, military, economic, and social considerations, all interacting to form a potent psychological mixture. In this situation, the arbitrary segregation of foreign from domestic factors in decision-making is misleading. Syria, perhaps more than any other Arab country, is a transnational environment where international influences usually metamorphose into internal pressures. In some cases--the Soviet Union's Syrian Communist Party and the large number of Palestinians are only the most obvious examples--external forces have powerful domestic Syrian constituent groups. In other cases, the fluidity with which interest groups coalesce around various issue areas results in more temporary alignment of internal and external influences.

Notwithstanding the limitations on a foreign-domestic distinction between environmental factors, for the purposes of maintaining a comparative perspective we will use such a dichotomy here. Still, it should not be assumed that environmental factors that have been placed in one or the other category in previous chapters need be so arranged in this Syrian chapter. The Palestinians, for example, generally constitute an external variable for Egypt and Iraq, while in Syria they are more immediately internal and will be treated as such. We have tried not to press the demands of comparability beyond the point of reason.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

The external environment in which interests and objectives are conceptualized and policy options selected must in turn be divided into two parts, non-regional and regional. The regional environment consists of the Arab societies of the Middle East and North Africa, as well as Iran, Israel, and Turkey. The rest of the world--which is more truly "foreign"--is considered non-regional.

Non-Regional External Environment

Syrian politics take place in the regional pressure-cooker of the Middle East. Yet, even the complex of regional problems does not suffice to insulate Syria from global developments in politics, military affairs, economics, and the like.

The superpower rivalry or "cold war" established itself early in the Middle East along the so-called Northern Tier of Iran, Greece, and Turkey. Ever since the initial U.S.-Soviet confrontations over Iran and the Straits, this rivalry has been a major factor in Middle East politics.¹

The dominant theme in the international environment from the late 1960s to the present--and probably one that will continue for some time into the future--is the final internment of the cold war era. This theme is exemplified not only in the U.S.-Soviet detente but also in the emerging dialogue between the U.S. and China, the increasing autonomy of several large geographical regions in the developing world (which in turn derives partially from the diminution of competition between the superpowers), and the growing independence of Europe and Japan.

For the United States and the Soviet Union the primary consideration is, and will continue to be, to identify areas (functional or geographical) of potential military conflict with each other and to take steps to reduce the possibilities of such conflict in those areas. At the least, if a concerted policy or policies of limited cooperation are infeasible, each of the two superpowers seeks to delimit the interests the other perceives as vital and to communicate to the other some idea of its own most important interests without prejudicing its future freedom of action.

Similarly, the emergence of China as a major rival to the Soviet Union in east Asia beyond China's borders, while only a marginal issue in the Middle East, has had a perceptible effect on Soviet global planning and probably some limited influence on Soviet tactics in the Middle East.

The shifting position of Europe and the growing international role of Japan, on the other hand, have both had a significant effect on U.S. regional policies. The direction of movement is clear and the pace rapid: already several important petroleum-consumer and political proposals initiated by the United States have fallen victim to this phenomenon.

At least until the October 1973 war, the Middle East did not have a priority in U.S.-Soviet dealings as many people believe. It is true that local conflict potential there was very high. It is also true that there

¹ See George Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948: A Study in Big-Power Rivalry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949), and J.C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1956).

was a substantial superpower presence and that this presence was characterized by almost totally dichotomous dispositions--the United States supporting Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and the moderate Arabs, generally; the U.S.S.R. backing more outspokenly revolutionary regimes. Nevertheless, superpower vital interests were (and are) *not* in conflict in the Middle East, and the military threat factor appeared far enough removed that even pressures for agreeing were sidelined. Global detente did not portend superpower agreement, except when an outbreak of large-scale Arab-Israeli fighting became a fact. Since the October war, the Middle East has been an issue of greater significance in Soviet-American relations. Because the likelihood of renewed hostilities is once again very high--both sides seeing major potential and realistic gains as a result of another war--Moscow and Washington have chosen to act upon their limited but important mutual interests in preventing such a war as a first priority.

The international environment in which negotiations must take place is a complex and fluid one. However, the increasing political autonomy of the Middle East subsystem substantially reduces both the political relevance of this external environment and the number of contingencies within that environment that entail significant consequences for the Middle East. At the same time, the Middle Eastern states are *less* autonomous than before insofar as military technology is concerned.

While the major powers outside the Middle East that play a role there include the countries of Western Europe and China as well as the Soviet Union and the United States, the two superpowers have been since the mid-1950s the only external states to have a decisive impact on regional developments. Recent trends suggest this situation is changing, i.e., that Europe is increasingly and perceptibly dissociating itself from the United States' policy in the Middle East and taking an active and independent role in the area. China remains an actor of only marginal importance in the Middle East.

In spite of the changing nature of Western Europe's Middle East role, the only two external powers that are pertinent to Syria's role are the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This is so because of Israel's financial, military, and, to some extent, political dependence on the United States, and because of Syria's military dependence

on the Soviet Union. Syria has been deeply involved in Soviet and American initiatives in the region. One of the first Middle Eastern countries to receive arms from the Soviet Union, and earlier the victim of a U.S.-sponsored coup,² Syria has been extremely sensitive to interference in Syrian affairs by either of the superpowers. The early involvement by the U.S., however, as well as domestic developments, led to the radicalization of Syrian political language and of some behavior. We are not suggesting, as many have maintained, that Syria became a "radical" by the late 1940s. Instead, we hold that internal demands and the resentment of certain specific Western actions led to a revolutionary language largely unsupported by broad-scale behavioral change. A few, dramatic, self-consciously radical actions, rather than systematic patterns of such actions, characterized Syrian politics.

Notwithstanding years of empty radical verbiage, the advent of Baath rule in Syria has brought major social change. In addition, and more central to the question of external influence on Syria, years of progressively closer (although intermittently stormy) relations with the U.S.S.R. resulted in major Soviet economic, political, and military assistance to the many regimes in Damascus.³ As their cooperation grew in depth and breadth, the influence the Soviet Union could exert on Syria grew. Assistance from the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe constituted the great bulk of Syria's foreign economic aid by the early 1970s, and trade with and aid

²See Miles Copeland, *The Game of Nations* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), pp. 40-46.

³The story of the growth and development of Syrian-Soviet relations has been given elsewhere (1) in books on Syrian politics such as Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), Gordon H. Torrey, *Syrian Politics and the Military, 1945-1958* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1964), and Itamar Rabinovich, *Syria Under the Ba'ath 1963-66: The Army-Party Symbiosis* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press and New York: Halsted Press, 1972); and (2) in studies on Soviet-Arab relations such as Michael Confino and Shimon Shamir, eds., *The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1973), George Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1972), R.D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), and Ivar Spector, *The Soviet Union and the Muslim World 1917-1958* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959).

from those sources was crucial to the Syrian economy. Similarly, by the 1960s the Syrian armed forces came to use Soviet military equipment almost exclusively.⁴ Because of the military implications of the Arab-Israeli conflict, this exclusivity of military supply gave the U.S.S.R. a tool for influence of potentially extraordinary importance. And in the same vein, Soviet political support for Syria, from the mid-1950s to date, has been consistent.⁵ This is not to say, of course, that Moscow supported all of Damascus' policies or vice versa, but rather that the overall tenor of relations has been a cooperation of remarkable consistency.

To what extent does the Soviet Union use the leverage its unique position confers in Syria? Evidence suggests that much influence is employed when necessary--but with restraint. Syria has long occupied a special role in Soviet Middle East policy, a role marked by high interest and uniquely consistent support. However, timing of equipment deliveries, level and nature of economic, political, and military assistance, use and threatened use of local Communist parties, direct communications to the Syrian populace, and resort to pressure by other Arab regimes--all of these tools have been employed at one time or another to attempt to persuade Syrians to pursue particular courses of action.⁶

The unique Soviet role in Syria has also raised, it should be pointed out, expectations that Moscow is hard put to fulfill. As a superpower with--in Syrian eyes--virtually limitless resources and a demonstrated interest in Middle East developments, Syrians will request and expect even a greater degree of support than has been forthcoming. Thus, when the Soviets fail to provide advanced military equipment or take other actions in their own interests that conflict with Syria's perceived interests, frustration will be greater than had the U.S. taken the same approach. Currently, however, and for as long as the Arab-Israeli conflict takes anything like its present form, potential friction between Syria and the Soviet Union will tend to be suppressed by the Syrian felt need for Soviet support.

⁴See the chart showing supply of arms to Syria in McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, p. 170.

⁵The only period of extended discord between Syrian leadership and the Soviets was during the 1958-1961 Egyptian-Syrian merger.

⁶E.g., "The Arab States: New Alignments," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 48 (26 November 1973), p. 3; "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions," *ibid.*, V, no. 22 (3 June 1974), p. 1; *Al-Nida*, December 11, 1970.

The informal Soviet bases, such as at Latakia for example, would, in the absence of the confrontation with Israel, affront Syrian nationalism. Instead, because the U.S.S.R. is perceived as an ally against Israel and its backers (read the U.S.), unusual Soviet latitude is permitted.⁷

Soviet influence is exerted for the most part in a few areas. The overall tenor of the Arab-Israeli conflict is a factor that leads to Soviet initiatives, particularly when there appears to be substantial potential for a large-scale outbreak of hostilities. This concern is more pronounced since the arrival of large members of Soviet civilian and military personnel in several Arab countries. U.S. actions in the Middle East, and the Soviet-American rivalry figure prominently among the issues that lead to the use of Soviet influence. Moscow has shown itself to be sensitive not only to the strategic threat of U.S. forces, but, as well to local gains made, either by the United States or at the expense of the Soviet Union. A third major area of Soviet interest (judged by action) is the Syrian Communist Party and the role of pro-Soviet elements in the Syrian government, generally. Influence in this area has been greatly encumbered by the determination to preserve the appearance of not interfering in Syrian domestic matters.

Direct American influence over Syria, on the other hand, is scant. The key role of the United States centers on the fact that Syria believes *only* the U.S. can exert effective pressure on Israel to return the Golan Heights and to "recognize Palestinian national rights." While this is an important perception, it is only partially accurate and therefore can only partially be exploited. In spite of widespread respect for and admiration of American technological prowess, and a feeling that Americans do indeed share many values with Arabs, the role of the United States in the issue areas of importance to Syria has been more constantly malevolent in Syrian eyes than that of the U.S.S.R. has been beneficent. This perception may change, however, if the United States takes an active role in the elaboration of a settlement of the Syrian-Israeli conflicts. Certainly, American technology and capital, as well as American cultural assets, will be much more effective tools of influence if the issues of Golan and the Palestinian problem can be resolved.

⁷Cf. P.J. Vatikiotis, "The Politics of the Fertile Crescent," *Political Dynamics in the Middle East*, Edited by Paul Y. Hammond and Sidney S. Alexander (New York: American Elsevier, 1971), p. 241.

Regional External Environment

Syrian life is a function of Middle Eastern life. Political life in Syria is affected by and in turn affects politics in all of the countries of the Arab East. Traditionally, Syria has been the object of competition between Egypt and Iraq. From soon after World War II, Syria acted as the revolutionary leader of the Middle East, and competition in revolutionary rhetoric between Syria and Egypt and Syria and Iraq was for a long time a commonplace of political life.

Today's Middle East is very different from the past, when this region was merely one among other fronts of various European rivalries. Not only has power shifted away from Western Europe, real and concentrated economic power lies in the Middle East. Today, Saudi Arabia and Iran form an economic armada. Oil--its existence in massive quantities in the Middle East and the need for it in massive quantities in the West (including Japan)--has altered the political balance in the Middle East and the world.

The regional environment in which Syria acts appears as a kaleidoscope. Egypt's importance in modern Syrian history, for example, continues, but the effect varies. Oil money from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Gulf states plays a role in Syrian actions, but so do Iraqi propaganda and Libyan policies. The major regional influences on Syria are Egypt, Iraq, and, of course, Israel.

The lure of Egypt since the late 1950s has been a key feature of Syrian life. After the dissolution of the Egyptian-Syrian union (1958-1961), many Syrian politicians publicly appealed for reunion with Egypt (under different conditions from those obtaining during the first attempt). Following the June War of 1967 and Nasser's death in 1970, however, Egypt's position in the Middle East and in Syria declined precipitately. Notwithstanding Syria's joining the Federation of Arab Republics, the urge to union faded. Not until the October (1973) War did Egypt's role increase, and this time with far different significance. Egypt's importance to Syria is as the primary Arab military power facing Israel. Without Egypt, any Syrian military confrontation with Israel is foredoomed.⁸ Egypt's cooperation, while it may not reverse this situation, at least requires Israel to undertake or prepare for a two-front conflict. Indeed, given the order of battle, Israel must

⁸See for example, "Middle East: The Pressure on Syria and the Soviet Role Centered on Geneva Conference," *The Arab World*, XXI, no 5149 (5 March 1974), p. 11.

deploy larger forces against Egypt than against Syria. Thus, Egyptian strategy is vital to the success of Syrian planning vis-a-vis Israel.

Iraq's importance to Syria is less tangible than Egypt's. Iraq is Syria's neighbor and has competed with Syria (and Egypt) for the leadership of the Arab progressive forces. Both Iraq and Syria are governed by the Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party, but the two branches of the party, as we have already indicated (Chapter 3), are at odds with each other. Indeed, the vitriol with which they address and describe each other far exceeds that used to describe Arab conservatives and the United States (though it falls short of the enmity directed at Israel). Still, the ties between Iraq and Syria are time-honored and many. Iraq has contributed in no small way to Syrian development and was among the first countries to extend substantial military and economic assistance to Syria during and after the October 1973 War. Moreover, despite the verbal hostility Iraq and Syria direct at each other, there is a considerable degree of public sentiment for union of the two countries, and half-hearted efforts toward unity have been numerous.

Israel is the other regional country that constitutes a constraint on the Syrian policy environment. Israel is one of the two strongest military powers in the Middle East (the other is Iran). The current Israeli occupation of Syria's Golan Heights foreordains the major Syrian objective of recovery of that territory. Similarly, Israel's ability to withstand the various challenges made by the Palestinians over the years means that, given the salience of the Palestinian issue in Syria, a primary goal of Syrian policy will be some resolution of the Palestinian problem. Even sectoral resource allocation in Syria is largely a function of the Syrian-Israeli conflict, and relations with the Soviet Union, with the West, in general, and the United States, in particular, have always been greatly affected by the problem of Israel. Israel, moreover, by means as diverse as the armed tractor, the F-4, and propaganda, has not hesitated to take an active role in Syrian politics.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Background

Syria is a political term given to a geographical entity. The reality is that this name, one that does today unite Syrians to some degree, hides

a bewildering array of opposing forces and ideas. Syria is characterized by heterogeneity and the schisms to which it has given rise, schisms based on political philosophy and support, on sectional rivalries, on economic philosophy, on economic group, on religion, on urban-rural dichotomy, and on ethnic background, to name but the most important. While individual scholars have searched for a unifying theme to explain the differences that rend Syrian society,⁹ we believe this unnecessary for our purposes. It suffices to understand that Syria in its present form is a result of (European) colonial boundary-making the arbitrariness of which reached its apogee in Africa.

In 1946, Syria was scarcely more than a name. The French mandate over Syria and Lebanon was characterized by a persistent determination to fractionate these territories, to maintain French control by encouraging the extant social divisions.¹⁰ Not until the 1950s did a feeling of Syrianism develop, and only during the 1958-1961 union with Egypt did the feeling take hold. Since the advent of the Baath regime in 1963, however, rapid progress has been made in the establishment of Syrian personality.¹¹

Syria was composed of nine agrocities (Aleppo, Dair as Zor, Damascus, Deraa, Hama, Homs, Kuneitrah, Latakia, and Suwayda) which even today form the basis of Syrian regionalism. Syrian "political" thought has until recently emphasized Arab nationalism or sub-national loyalties rather than (and therefore to a large extent at the expense of) Syrian nationalism. Political groupings before 1970 sought a personal, regional, or class following instead of a broad national following.¹²

The absence of a body of political belief or behavior that might be called "national" and unavailability of jobs meant that politics took place on two levels--among the powerful families who constituted the traditional

⁹E.g., Michael H. Van Dusen, "Political Integration and Regionalism in Syria," *Middle East Journal*, XXVI, no. 2 (Spring 1972), pp. 123-136.

¹⁰One of the concrete results of this policy was the overrepresentation of minorities in the Syrian military. This development is discussed below.

¹¹Moshe Ma'oz, "Attempts at Creating a Political Community in Modern Syria," *Middle East Journal*, XXVI, no. 4 (Autumn 1970), p. 398.

¹²Van Dusen, "Political Integration," pp. 123-128; Richard F. Nyrop et al., *Area Handbook for Syria* (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Area Studies Division, The American University, 1971), p. 163.

political system and among the powerless group of politically interested individuals of middle class and peasant origins. The political training ground of the latter was the government high school. The career destinations of the products of this training were teaching and the military.¹³

We shall not discuss the stormy political history of postwar Syria before 1966 in any detail, for that has been done elsewhere.¹⁴ It is a story of coup upon coup. For the most part the resulting regimes enjoyed no significant popular constituency. As a result, even though much of the energy of the adult male population has been devoted to political thought

this energy has typically been employed to oppose whatever government is in power at the time and to criticize other political forces and even other members of one's own political group.... [M]ost politically aware individuals have had limited means of expressing opinion. Often frustrated, they have sought the most direct means available: strikes and demonstrations, personal contacts with influential politicians and, at times, removal of an offending individual through assassination.¹⁵

Notwithstanding revolutionary rhetoric until 1963, none of the military regimes that succeeded either each other or one of the intermittent civilian administrations ever undertook a true revolution or even major social change in Syria.¹⁶ Even after 1963, a concerted and broad-based movement toward social change had to await the advent of the neo-Baath in 1966.

The Baath Party was founded in Syria and recruited among ex-peasant, lower-middle class groups. Important elements of Baathism included pan-Arabism and secularism (although the special place of Islam as a cultural influence in Arabism was recognized), the latter particularly attractive to religious minorities such as the Alawis. Indeed, when the Baath began serious recruiting in 1947, one of the first cells was established in the Alawi-populated Latakia region. Both the Baath and the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party (SSNP), and particularly the latter, were highly successful in recruiting the socially mobilized and downtrodden Alawis.¹⁷

¹³See, especially, Van Dusen, "Political Integration," pp. 126-127.

¹⁴Torrey, *Syrian Politics*; Seale, *The Struggle*; Rabinovich, *Syria*.

¹⁵Nyrop et al., *Area Handbook*, p. 163

¹⁶Vatikiotis, "The Politics," p. 237.

¹⁷Ma'oz, "Attempts," pp. 399-402; Van Dusen, "Political Integration," pp. 132-133.

Soon after the union of Egypt and Syria in 1958, Gamal Abdel Nasser disbanded the Baath Party in Syria. In fact, however, the party simply went underground in the Latakia region. In another action to subordinate Syria and preempt any military threat to the union, a number of officers were transferred to Egypt or dismissed from military service. In 1959, several of those officers in Egypt founded a secret Baathist military committee. The leadership of this committee consisted of three Alawis and two Ismailis (another Islamic minority group). These leaders included Salah Jadid, Hafez Assad, and Abd al-Karim al-Jundi, all of whom were to become major figures in later years. After the secession of Syria from the United Arab Republic in 1961, many military officers with political ties were separated from the army, including much of the membership of the still secret military committee. Meanwhile, the Syrian Baathists who had remained organized surfaced again as *Qutriyin* ("regionalists," i.e., separatists)¹⁸ after the Baath Fifth National Congress (1962), to establish a distinct Baath organization. Neither the *Qutriyin's* Baath nor the old-time Baath (now essentially an Iraqi creature) considered the other legal.¹⁹

On March 8, 1963, a military coup toppled the Syrian civilian government. The Baath Party played no real role in the coup, and indeed even within the military there were very few Baathists just before and during the coup. Once the operation was completed, however, Baathists were again well represented: through careful pre-coup placement of individuals in personnel jobs, Baathist officers were called back, and they in turn were put in crucial positions throughout the army. The Baathists dominated the army by virtue of their effective organization (based on the still secret military committee founded in 1959) and sectarian loyalties. As a result of the unity of the Baathist military participants and followers (contrasted with the disunity of the other groups that took part in the coup), the Baath ended in control of the new regime, holding half the cabinet posts.

¹⁸It should not, however, be inferred that the *Qutriyin* were alike. They represented a heterogeneous group of Baathists united mainly by opposition to the established Baathists.

¹⁹Nikolaos Van Dam, "The Struggle for Power in Syria and the Ba'th Party (1958-1966)," *Orient*, XIV, no. 1 (Marz 1972), pp. 10-11; Rabinovich, *Syria*, pp. 24-39.

Yet, there were still two distinct Baath parties, and the civilian Baathists were unaware of the existence of the secret military committee within their ranks. Through a variety of maneuvers,²⁰ the military group forced its way into--i.e., infiltrated--the civilian organizations, while its own committee remained secret. The years following the "Baath" coup of March 8, 1963 and leading up to the seizure of power by Salah Jadid were marked, first, by the consolidation of the position of the secret military committee as it eliminated one group of rivals after another, and then, by the division of the army along sectarian lines. The latter development was unintentionally hastened by Amin al-Hafez, the Syrian strongman, and directly benefitted Salah Jadid, for the minorities (Alawis, Druse, Ismailis) tended to consolidate while the Sunnis did not. Thus, Sunnis who supported Jadid often continued to support him, while Alawis, Druse, and Ismailis banded together in even closer support. During these years, the Baath also witnessed a growing schism between the national command under Aflaq and Bitar and the regional command which was dominated by the military Baathists.

The Syrian army has had a tradition of overrepresentation of the ethnic minorities. There are several reasons for this disproportionate membership. First, the French consistently recruited military personnel from the minorities to prevent Syrian unity. Second, the Sunnis in turn did not cooperate with the French. They refused to enlist. Third, the rural minorities could not afford to pay the fee required for exemption from military service. Fourth, a military career offered one of the few avenues for social advancement. Fifth, Alawis used the military academy as a means to further their education. Sixth, military life was more attractive to those facing life as downtrodden rural villagers than to urban members of the ethnic majority. Seventh, Alawis and Druse in turn recruited from and promoted their friends and relatives. Eighth, the succession of coups in Syria led to the dismissal of many Sunni officers. The result of all these factors was that by December of 1965--i.e., on the eve of the neo-Baath coup--Alawi and Druze officers were in charge of about 70-75 percent of all army units;²¹ Sunnis only about 25-30 percent. Since

²⁰These are described in detail in Van Dam, "The Struggle for Power," *passim*.

²¹However only 75-80 percent of these could be viewed as supporters of Jadid; the remainder followed Mohammed Umrán.

Sunnis comprise the vast majority of the population, this pattern of power is remarkable.²²

Thus, with the army (and the secret Baath military committee) and the Baath regional command behind him, Salah Jadid led a coup on February 23, 1966 that removed Amin al-Hafez from the government and party and the Aflaq-Bitar-led national command from party leadership²³ in Syria. The new Syrian leadership preached a radical doctrine. The novelty was that a serious effort was made to implement the program.

Baath doctrine, radicalized after the Sixth Baath National Congress (1963) as a part of the political process²⁴ and as a function of minority discontent with the Syrian social status quo, gave rise to Syrian policies of more rapid and extensive land reform, nationalization, socialism, and

²²See Van Dam, "The Struggle," pp. 16-17; Van Dusen, "Political Integration," p. 145; Rabinovich, *Syria*; Eliezer Be'eri, *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society* (New York: Praeger, 1969), pp. 336-338; William Hazen and Peter Gubser, *Selected Minority Groups of the Middle East: The Alawites, Berbers, Druze, and Kurds* (Kensington, Maryland: American Institutes for Research, 1973), pp. 81-82, 97-98; Martin Seymour, "The Dynamics of Power in Syria Since the Breach with Egypt," *Middle Eastern Studies*, VI, no 1 (January 1970), p. 40; George Haddad, *Revolutions and Military Rule in the Middle East: The Arab States* (New York: Robert Speller, 1971), II, p. 45; Gad Soffer, "The Role of the Officer Class in Syrian Politics and Society" (Ph.D. dissertation, The American University, 1968), pp. 26-26.

²³The Syrian experience proved the validity of what Baathists should have learned from the Arif coup of November 1963 in Iraq--the impossibility of maintaining civilian party control over the military. As Aflaq said, "We wish to alter the army's role by precluding the formation of a bloc of military officers within the party's leadership. When the party chooses as a leader someone from the military, he should not retain his military position. Rather, he should devote himself to civilian leadership." *Al Hayat*, February 25, 1966. See also A.I. Dawisha, "The Transnational Party in Regional Politics: The Arab Ba'th Party," *Asian Affairs*, LXI, no. 1 (February 1974), pp. 23-31.

²⁴Although the change in Baath outlook began to be confirmed as early as 1963, old-line Baathists attacked it most vehemently immediately after the neo-Baath coup of 1966, when Aflaq, for example, accused the new Syrian Baath of deviationism, of subverting true Baathism. He accused the Syrian leadership of slavishness, comparing them with Arab Communists. *Al Hayat*, February 25, 1966.

secularism. All economic support was directed to the public sector. The favoritism shown rural districts and the minorities, especially the Alawis, was flagrant under the new regime.

The first challenge to Jadid's authority was an abortive coup, an attempt led by Salim Hatum, probably staged on ethnic grounds. (Hatun was Druze. It was after the neo-Baath takeover in 1966 that the Alawis began consolidating their position and eliminating the other minorities that had theretofore been allies.) Although the Hatun coup was foiled, intro-party conflicts began to arise in late 1966. By then, Jadid had apparently recognized Hafez Assad to be his major potential rival. Assad's position in the military had been crucial to the success of the Jadid coup.

As the conflict between Jadid and Assad grew more concrete, anti-government (in fact, anti-Alawi) demonstrations erupted and the June 1967 War began. These episodes may be seen as interludes in the Jadid-Assad confrontation that lasted four years (1966-1970). It is probable that Assad would have initiated a coup sooner or later. His power was increasing in Syria,²⁵ and power lay with the military. Jadid, in order to overcome this fact, tried to establish new forces in Syria. Setting up and arming Sa'iqa and looking to the militia for additional support, Jadid governed through the party and tried to reduce the military's role in Syria. (Indeed, Jadid maintained control with a relatively obscure position in the Baath, preferring low visibility because of the Alawi-Sunni division.)

In 1967, Jadid essayed to place responsibility for Syria's poor showing on Assad's military. While public opinion placed blame on both the party and the armed forces, the latter was subject to particularly scathing attacks from both ends of the political spectrum. However, in 1968 the militia's arms were withdrawn, and in 1969 the security forces were taken over by the Ministry of Defense. Increasingly, Jadid's supporters in the military were removed or changed their allegiance. By 1968, Assad's ascendancy to power was relatively clear. In 1969, he staged a demi-coup that was inconclusive but continued the trend of improving Assad's position vis-a-vis that of Jadid. Assad, a frequent critic of the Soviet role in Syria--and more specifically of Jadid's

²⁵We shall not chronicle the progressive stages of Assad's control. It should only be noted here that his move in November 1970 was the last step of a multiple-stage change of power.

agreements with Moscow--continued to move against groups he thought might oppose him while trying to smooth his relations with the Soviet Union.²⁶ Finally, in September 1970, Salah Jadid and others in the party hierarchy decided to send Syrian tanks to participate in the Jordanian civil war. Hafez Assad and some others in the military hierarchy strongly opposed the commitment of the armor, and Assad, commander of the air force, refused to send in support for the Syrian armor on the grounds that greater Syrian participation in the Palestinian-Jordanian *evenements* would result in Israeli or perhaps even American involvement. The outcome of the Syrian "invasion" was not in doubt, since the Syrian tanks had no protection against Hussein's air strikes. Yet, the final outcome was even more significant for Syria--the replacement of Jadid by Assad.

Since March of 1969, Syria had itself been on the verge of civil war, the conflict between the two Alawi, former military allies Jadid and Assad, having become open. In any event, the fact that Assad controlled the only armed force in the country proved decisive.²⁷ Although the Baath Party voted to remove Assad and several of his supporters from their positions, the coup that followed these decisions resulted in a takeover by Assad of unquestioned political paramountcy. Jadid and many of his allies were replaced in mid-November 1970.

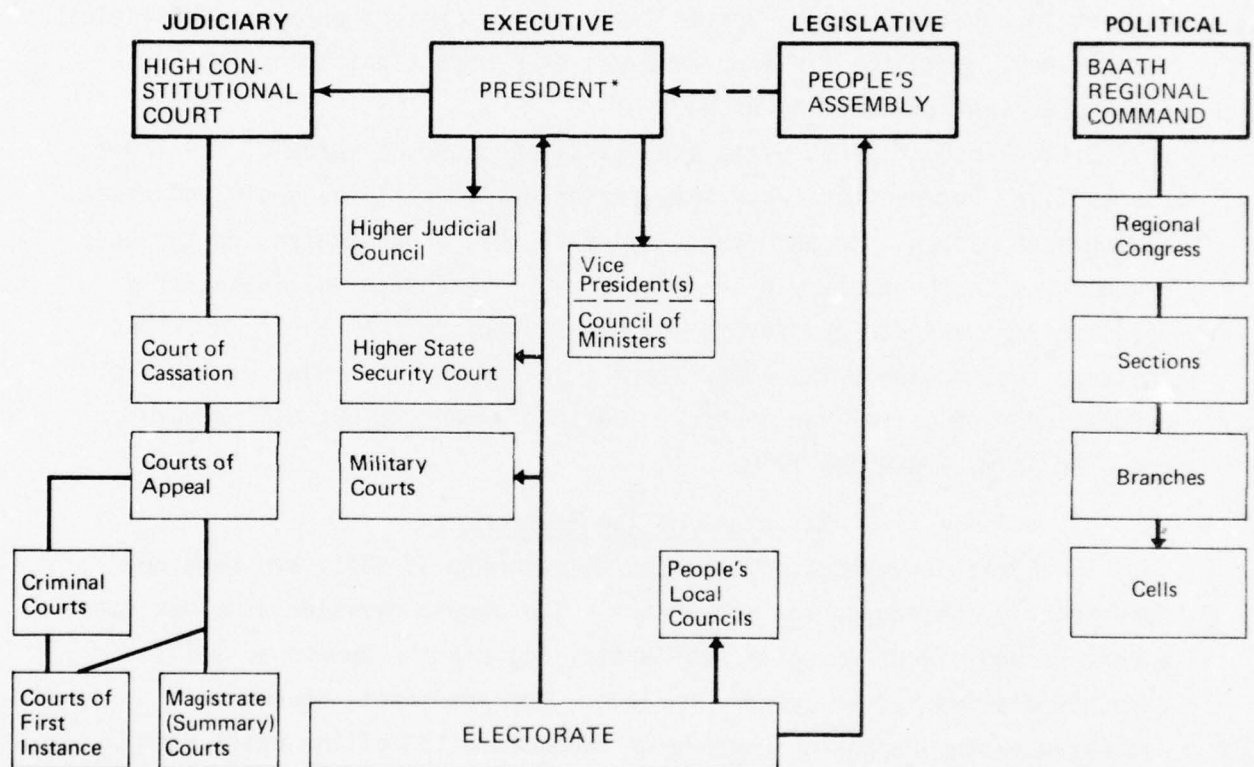
Structure of the Government

The Syrian constitution, revised as recently as 1973, has remained fundamentally unchanged for many years. The newest revision provides for a very strong executive (with substantial legislative powers as well) directly elected by the Syrian populace. The president, however, is nominated by the People's Assembly on recommendation of the Baath Party Regional Command. Although the judicial system is nominally independent

²⁶Rabinovich, *Syria*, pp. 215-217; Tabitha Petran, *Syria* (New York: Praeger, 1972), p. 240; Avigdor Levy, "The Syrian Communists and the Ba'th Power Struggle, 1966-1970," *The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East*, edited by Michael Confino and Shimon Shamir (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press (1973), pp. 407-498; Arey Yodfat, "The End of Syria's Isolation?" *The World Today*, XXVII, no. 8 (August 1971), pp. 332-334; Al-Jarida, November 8, 1968.

²⁷See *al-Nahar*, *as-Sayyad*, *al-Anwar* from March 1969 through November 30, 1970. See also "The Civilians Win," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, I, no. 37 (16 November 1970), pp. 1-2; "The Loser Wins," *ibid.*, I, no. 38 (23 November 1970), pp. 1-2; Yodfat, "The End," p. 335.

Figure 6. STRUCTURE OF THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT



* President nominated by People's Assembly on recommendation of the Baath Party Regional Command

of the executive, the president appoints members of the Supreme (or Higher Constitutional) court, as well as of the Higher Judicial Council whose responsibility is to ensure this independence. Moreover, the constitution provides for military courts which have played an important role in Syria by circumventing the civil and criminal court system.

The arenas in which Syrian political behavior takes place have changed under the Assad regime. The People's Assembly serves as a national legislature and is directly elected. This body and the local councils effect most of the legislation. The president, however, has important legislative functions, principally between sessions of the People's Assembly but also "in cases of absolute need."²⁸ Moreover, the president can "submit important matters concerning higher national interests" to a popular referendum.²⁹

The Baath party's formal role in governance is indirect but multifaceted. "The vanguard party in the society and state is the Baath Arab Socialist Party." To the party falls the responsibility for direction of the National Progressive Front (see below).³⁰ In addition, the Baath Regional Command proposes one or more presidential nominees to the People's Assembly which in turn nominates a presidential candidate.³¹

Operation of the Syrian Political System

"The party was afflicted by a leadership with a domineering and maneuvering mentality which used terrorist, twisted methods in no way connected with Ba'th Party ethics; they created suspicion, hatred, and isolation everywhere, and led the party and the country to the brink of an abyss."³² So Hafez Assad described the situation in Syria before his coup. Discounting the propaganda value of his description, there is ample evidence to suggest both that the Syrian populace resented Jadid's controls

²⁸Syrian constitution, Article III.

²⁹*Ibid.*, Article 112.

³⁰Both provisions are in Article 8.

³¹*Ibid.*, Articles 71 and 84.

³²Hafez Assad, as quoted by David Holmstrom, "Syria--Unity, Liberty, and Socialism," *Middle East International*, no. 22 (April 1973), p. 11

and that Assad placed a very high priority upon reversing the trend toward ever stricter government control.³³ That he has succeeded in relaxing controls is clear.

Symbolic of Assad's approach to governing was his promulgation of provisions leading to direct election of the president. And the Syrian electorate in turn gave Assad a strong vote of confidence in the March 1971 presidential election, when 99 percent of the votes affirmed his nomination and elected him to a seven-year term.³⁴ After selection by the Baath Party and the People's Assembly, election may appear superfluous. Yet, the principle is crucial: popular election allows the president to maintain a position above the party, the army, the Alawis, or other groups within society.³⁵

Similarly, Assad early moved toward the creation of more democratic participation in the Syrian government. Three months after his accession to power, Assad announced formation of the People's Assembly. Although initially appointed, later People's Assemblies were to be and have been elected. Perhaps as important as election was the composition of the Assembly. In the first (appointed) Assembly, Baathists only barely outnumbered the sum of other groups represented which included, besides Syrian Communists and Nasserites, representatives of traditionally anti-Baath groups.

From May 1971 until spring of 1972, negotiations over the terms of the National Progressive Front--a bloc of parties and popular groups--took place. The Front institutionalizes non-Baath popular representation in the government. It can be viewed as another indication of Assad's determination to broaden the power base (support) of Syrian government. Assad

³³*Ibid.*; "Assad Opens New Paths for the Syrians," *The Daily Star* (Beirut), March 18, 1971; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 251-252; Rabinovich, *Syria*, p. 217. Mohammad Khleifawi's considerable popularity was testament to the Syrian desire for and appreciation of liberalization. Much of his popularity derived from his rescinding of suppressive measures while Minister of the Interior.

³⁴"It is true that 99 percent may draw snickers in certain circles, but it must be remembered that the Syrians were very enthusiastic in their support of the new regime." "Assad Opens New Paths." "The masses said yes...to Hafez Assad because he disagreed with the Baath.... He also said that 'the party will no longer be that of a special group because the cornerstone is individual freedom....'" *Al Hayat* (Beirut), March 15, 1971.

³⁵

See Paul Balta's articles in *Le Monde*, March 23-26, 1971; Holmstrom, "Syria," p. 12.

has stated that national unity is the key to Syrian progress. Whether his concern is directed toward national stability or his own regime's stability--in either case, Assad has clearly set out to bring about a greater degree of participation in, identification with, and national unity behind Syrian government.³⁶ The Front includes the Syrian Baath, the Syrian Communist Party, the Arab Socialist Union (a Nasserite group), the Socialist Union, and the Arab Socialist Party. This is also essentially the make-up of the People's Assembly elected in 1973, with 140 of the 186 seats having been won by Front parties, 42 by independents, and four by opposition candidates.³⁷ Similarly, the Syrian cabinet has generally been composed of 50 percent non-Baathists since 1972. From 1973, both Syrian Communist Party factions were represented, as well as the Arab Socialist Union, Socialist Union, and Arab Socialist Party. Also like the Assembly, the cabinet has a number of independents.³⁸ The diverse make-up of the Assembly, the Front, and the cabinet--all of these can be seen as efforts to broaden Assad's base.

At the local level, too, the new regime has taken a more relaxed attitude, allowing opponents to the regime to run for election. For example, in 1972, Muslim Brotherhood candidates soundly defeated those of the National Front in Homs,³⁹ a city of strong anti-Baath and conservative feeling.⁴⁰

³⁶See Article 8 of the Syrian constitution; Holmstrom, "Syria," p. 11; *Le Monde*, March 23, 1971; Petran, *Syria*, p. 251; Mohammed al-Ayyubi, "Syrian Government Policy Statement," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, herein after FBIS, no. 40 (28 February 1973), Supplement 6, pp. 1-2; Dawisha, "The Transnational Party," p. 27; Malcolm H. Kerr, "Hafiz Asad and the Changing Patterns of Syrian Politics," *International Journal*, XXVIII, no. 4 (Autumn 1973), pp. 702-703.

³⁷Detailed reporting on the elections is in *al-Baath*, May 3, 6-9, 20, 26-30, 1973; and *L'Orient Le Jour*, May 9, 14, 21, 28, 1973. *An-Nahar Arab Report*, 1973; Europa Publications, *The Middle East and North Africa*, 1973-74, p. 627.

³⁸"The New Cabinet," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 1 (1 January 1973), p. 4; Europa, *The Middle East*, p. 626.

³⁹In Homs and Hama, traditional Baath opposition and the Muslim Brotherhood attempted to persuade the Syrians to boycott the spring 1973 legislative elections.

⁴⁰"The New Cabinet"; Rabinovich, *Syria*, p. 217.

The foregoing should not be taken as a suggestion that Assad has less control of Syria than did Jadid or others, nor that the Baath, and the military have relinquished their dominance. Assad makes the important decisions in Syria today, and those the government takes, like Assad's own decisions, do and will receive unanimous or nearly unanimous backing in the People's Assembly, the National Progressive Front, Baath Party Congress, the media, and elsewhere. The decision-making process might be called participatory consensus--that is, a process by which all parties agree at the outset to officially support the final decision in return for which the views of each party will be taken into account by the actual policymakers. That the participants do not necessarily receive any accommodation or compromise on individual issues is the feature distinguishing this process from that of consensus in its more widely accepted form. The benefits of participation are significant--the opportunity to function as a political party at the national level, to recruit, campaign, and so on;⁴¹ the chance to advance views on major issues with the knowledge that these positions, constituting the feeling of an important and representative group, will be seriously considered by the regime; and the possibility of shaping opinions through communication "down" and in the media. The regime also derives benefits of capital significance: more broad-based support, the consequently increased legitimacy, an opportunity to hear a variety of positions (and to deal with public opinion) on crucial issues, greater credibility in domestic communications and a larger resource base in the communications effort.⁴² To some extent, the operations of overt and legal parties are both easier and more difficult to monitor than are those of proscribed groups.

While policy levels of the Syrian government have been particularly affected by the country's succession of coups and political purges over the years, most of the civil service has provided some continuity. Indeed, before the 1963 coup that led to Baath rule, "the civil service remained generally outside of politics, and appointments were usually based upon

⁴¹No recruitment may take place in the army or among students, however, except Baath.

⁴²The Baath Party exerts itself in no small way to ensure that information flows "down" to the people and up to the hierarchy. Yet, such a communications system is subject to problems in human behavior. Thus, assistance from the other parties and "popular organizations" (see below) is very useful.

professional background, including education and the results of written examinations....[C]ivil service rolls showed little evidence of prejudice against religious or ethnic minorities...."⁴³ However, after the 1963 coup, the increased emigration of trained personnel adversely affected the civil service. In addition, the new regime and those which followed politicized civil service recruitment. This was particularly true at higher levels of the bureaucracy. Thus, while the structure of the civil service has been stable, the staffing has not, prejudicing bureaucratic effectiveness. Moreover, the Syrian civil service is hampered by problems facing its counterparts in other developing countries, *viz.*, shortage of trained personnel, unwillingness to accept or delegate responsibility effectively, and lack of coordination between various parts of the bureaucracy.⁴⁴

As in any regime originating as Assad's, the difficulty in integrating career civil service and political appointee efforts is considerable. This generic problem has both diminished and increased over time. It has diminished insofar as standard operating procedures, routines of interaction, have been established to facilitate the implementation of policy. The relative stability Assad has brought to Syria has meant less complete and frequent personnel turnover. As in any large organization, individuals tend to look for and work with and through those who have been effective in other interactions. Time aids this selection process. Individual and organizational learning and change have been given in a period to produce results.

Operating in the other direction--i.e., toward lesser integration of policy levels and career civil service actions--are several factors. First, in spite of unwonted regime stability, accretion of Alawis into key decision roles has increased. Second, Assad has consistently been concerned to see that no one build bridges of such strength to key constituencies as might threaten his regime. Third, the administrative requirements of his position atop three bureaucracies (government, party, military), of the determination to shoulder important policy decisions, and of the unwillingness of others

⁴³ Nyrop et al., *Area Handbook*, p. 140.

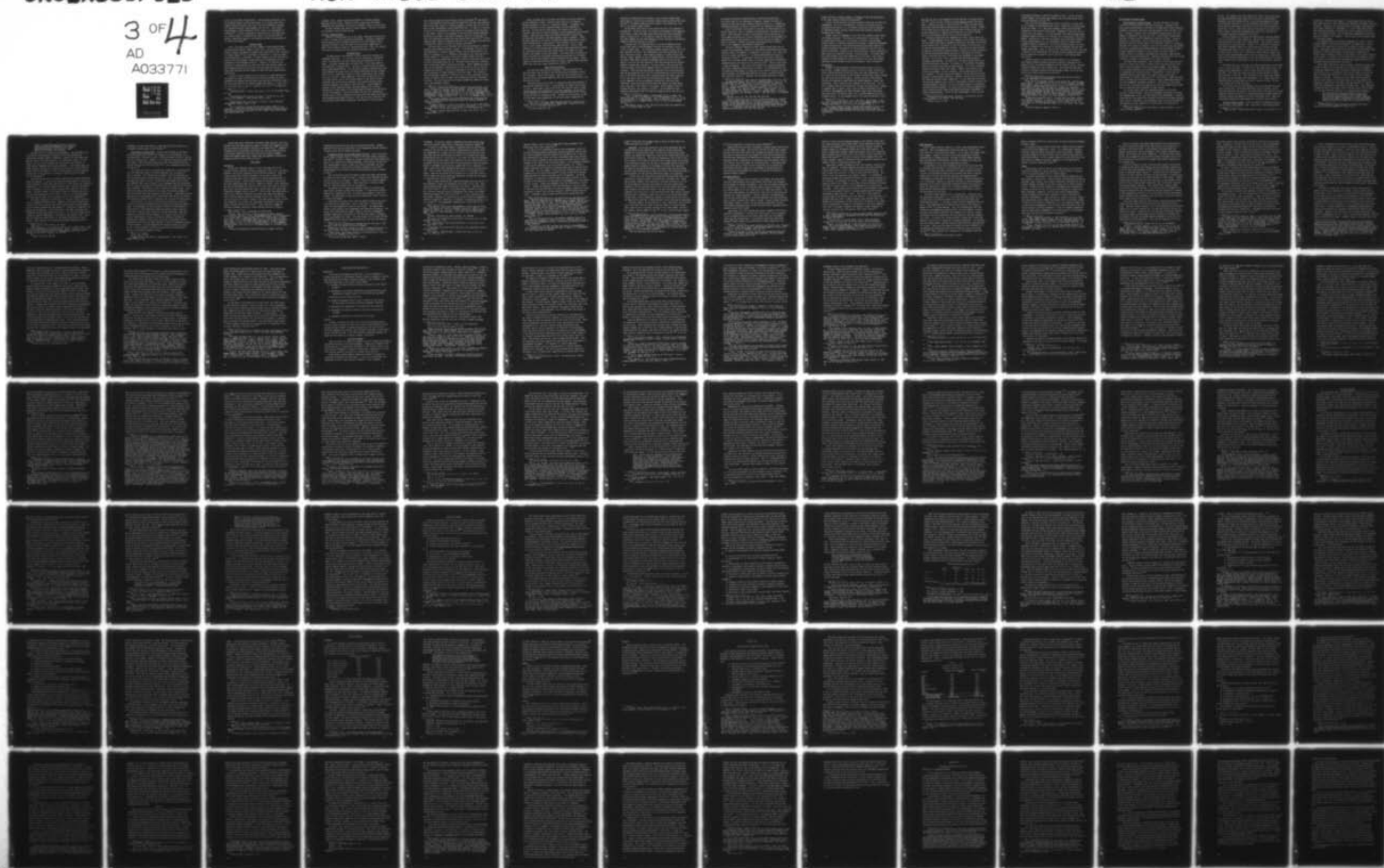
⁴⁴ *Ibid.*; Petran, *Syria*, p. 236.

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to do so, have slowly isolated Assad. Time and other constraints limit his extensive contact to other key figures in the regime--Abdel Halim Khaddam (foreign minister), Naji Jamil (air force commander), Mustapha Tlas (defense minister), Adnan Dabbagh, and the like. Given Assad's determination to isolate potential rivals as well, his estrangement is reinforced.⁴⁵ Finally, paradoxically, the stability of the regime acts as a further hurdle to integration by virtue of the socialization of sectoral organization chiefs to the parochial outlooks and approaches of the groups they manage.⁴⁶

Interest Groups

Syria, like other countries, has a number of constituencies whose attitudes decision-makers ignore at their peril. While we require that groups of people be organized in Western-style democracies to be considered as interest groups,⁴⁷ this requirement is unrealistic in countries where such organization is proscribed. It would, however, be quite incorrect to conclude that Syrian groups, because some are not organized, are of no consequence in decisionmaking councils. Indeed, it is precisely the diversity of constituencies--we shall here call them interest groups--to which communications are directed and for which specific policies are chosen that confounds outside attempts to explicate those communications and policies.

In Syria, interest groups must be visualized in proper perspective. The complex of issues and cross-cutting interests precludes the facile assumption that because two individuals may subscribe to differing views in one issue area they will of necessity oppose each other. *No single issue has a salience level so high as to dominate all others.*⁴⁸ Alliances are

⁴⁵ "Waiting for War," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 41 (14 October 1974), pp. 2-3.

⁴⁶ See Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), *passim*.

⁴⁷ Joseph Dunner, ed., *Dictionary of Political Science* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1964), p. 261.

⁴⁸ It is incorrect to assume that the Arab-Israeli conflict is an exception. If this were the case, the Syrian government, the position of which has been *relatively* consistent on this subject, would have enjoyed much greater stability.

extremely fluid: groups coalesce and disperse in different patterns depending upon the issue. Otherwise stated, groups have overlapping membership; few individuals are allied--or opposed--across all issue areas.

We shall consider four types of interest groups: political, military, socio-economic, and non-state national.

Political Interest Groups

Political interest groups are of two types, ideological and partisan. In fact, of course, the two overlap considerably. Ideological Communists tend to belong to one or another faction of the Syrian Communist Party. Ideological dissent is not the stuff of which political opposition is made in Syria except in terms of intra-party politics. Thus, this analysis will focus on ideology within the context of partisan politics.

The Baath Party

The Baath Party is the umbrella of unity under which continual disagreements take place. It is a party riven by personality, ideological, ethnic, associational, and other schisms and yet determined to stay in power. As we have already seen, the Baath Party is less the essence of the regime than is Assad himself. Similarly, rivalries within the Baath often concern personalities. The names most frequently mentioned are Salah Jadid, Mustapha Tlas, Naji Jamil, and Rifaat Assad (Hafez Assad's brother). Jadid is still considered a threat to Assad's leadership by some, though he is still in jail. Jadid symbolizes--ironically, because he, too, was a military officer, one of the original members of the secret military committee--the civilian party leadership once against military control, the Baath ideologist over against "Arab reaction." A more immediate personal rivalry concerned Defense Minister Mustapha Tlas and Assad. Reminiscent in some respects of the Assad-Jadid difference, the new schism was less far-reaching. Tlas has had close relations with conservative leaders such as Feisal and Hussein, and there were some rumors that Hussein was encouraging the Assad-Tlas split. Over the last year, Assad and Tlas seem to have restored their cooperation, but Assad has tried to reduce

Tlas' direct contact with the military as much as possible.⁴⁹ Naji Jamil's role in the personal rivalries behind the Baath wall has been less prominent. While he has been viewed as a sometime opponent of Assad (and ally of Tlas), Jamil is more consistently issue-oriented than Tlas. If there is a constant, it may be in his problems with Rifaat Assad, which began in the early days of the regime. Assad is the commander of the so-called "Defense Companies." Contrary to the image of the Defense Companies some like to portray, the units are maintained to defend the Assad regime rather than Syria.⁵⁰ Rifaat Assad has been involved in personal conflicts with a variety of personalities, including Tlas, Jamil, Ali Salah, Ali Haidar, and others.⁵¹

Yet the extent to which the Baath itself may be considered an interest group has been reduced by Assad's control. To the degree it may still be distinguished as an interest group different from the administration, the Baath--or elements of it--is frequently influenced by the Iraqi position on various issues.⁵² Since many of the historic Baath leaders and their followers have been purged from the party, Assad has a much more disciplined and less fractionated party per se. The Baath Party blessing is therefore used to legitimize Assad's regime and decisions. Assad, remembering Jadid's fate, can be expected to retain control of the military, the civilian government, and the party. One of his techniques is to restrict the role of other individuals to fewer branches of political power. This technique has the advantage of making it difficult for any single individual to have access to several levers of power, while preserving political safe-havens for Assad. The result may well be increased competition between the party, army, and government, however.

⁴⁹Riad N. El-Rayyes and Dunia Nahas, editors, *The October War: Documents, Personalities, Analyses and Maps* (Beirut: An-Nahar Press Services S.A.R.L., 1974), pp. 178-180; "Waiting for War"; "Syria: Two Years Under President Assad (I)," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 39 (25 September 1972), Backgrounder; "Jordan: Unwelcome Hand," *ibid.*, no. 26 (26 June 1972), p. 3; "Syrian Front: Tense But Calm," *ibid.*, III, no. 51 (18 December 1972), pp. 2-3.

⁵⁰The Defense Companies were established during the Jadid-Assad conflict. Personnel have been carefully selected for loyalty; equipment is the most up-to-date.

⁵¹"Domestic Unrest," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 23 (5 June 1972), p. 1; "Mounting Tension," *ibid.*, III, no. 25 (19 June 1972), p. 2; "Internal Troubles," *ibid.*, II, no. 29 (19 July 1971), p. 4; "Waiting for War."

⁵²"Syria: The Ball Starts Rolling," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 9 (4 March 1974), p. 1.

Within the Baath Party, and within the country as a whole, there are various ideological trends. These are never clear-cut, for Baathist ideology (especially in Syria) is singularly diffuse. In general, then, one can distinguish certain groupings along a radical-conservative spectrum. The positions of these groups are clearer with respect to concrete issues than in terms of ideology, or even ideological justification, however. Baathists have traditionally been pan-Arabists (rather than nationalists), secularists, and more recently, social reformers. (There has been something of an inverse relationship between dedication to social reform and dedication to pan-Arabism.) While Arabism is still a major force in Syria, Syrian nationalism has taken the fore. And as a real revolution in social thinking has already taken place under Baath guidance, the ideological question has been calmed except with respect to international and economic issues (see below). Long after Assad's accession to power, the Baath was torn between ideologically motivated civilian Baath radicals and the more pragmatic group surrounding the new leader. Soviet support for Assad and the effectiveness of Assad's internal Baath personnel shifts over time have largely quieted this conflict.⁵³

Other Political Parties

The other political parties and groups in Syria wield much less political power than the Baath, even the Assad-controlled Baath, but may well represent a larger constituency. Major parties include the Arab Socialist Union, the Syrian Communist Party, the Arab Socialist Party, and the Socialist Union.

The Arab Socialist Union (ASU) is a Nasserite group participating in the National Progressive Front. It has perhaps the largest constituency in Syria. Jamal Atassi, head of the Syrian Arab Socialist Union, claims that 80 percent of the population is at least sympathetic to the ASU.⁵⁴ The ASU supports the creation of a single, mass political party in Syria (along the lines of the Egyptian ASU). Although the ASU has been at odds with the Baath--even dropping out of the Front--Atassi recognizes the

⁵³ See "Syria: Two Years Under President Assad (2), *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 40 (2 October 1972), Background; "Potential Trouble," *ibid.*, II, no. 15 (12 April 1971), pp. 1-2.

⁵⁴ *Le Monde*, March 23, 1971.

necessity of coexisting with the Baath as one of Assad's chosen tools, particularly in view of the restrictions imposed upon the ASU and the other parties.⁵⁵ Pro-Nasser groups continue to mount a coup capability, too, even if the threat is much reduced.

The Socialist Union (SU) is also a Nasserite party, but composed of ex-Baathists. The party traces its origins to the breakup of the Egyptian-Syrian union in 1961, when Sami Sufan bolted the Baath Party separatist group to create the SU. Its following is smaller than that of the ASU, but taken together the two major Nasserite parties represent a considerable segment of political opinion in Syria.⁵⁶

A smaller but still important party is the Syrian Communist Party. Led for many years by Khalid Bakdash, the party has suffered a serious schism in recent years. The difference embraces several issues, one of the most important of which is the independence (and hence Syrianism) of the party from Soviet policy. After several attempts at reconciliation were aborted, several leaders of the anti-Bakdash group, including Daniel Neemeh and Zohair Abdel Samad, rejoined the Bakdash group at the end of 1973. However, the split was then formalized, when the unreconciled anti-Bakdash Communists formed their own party. In early January 1974 they held the "Fourth Congress of the Syrian Communist Party," electing Riad Turk first secretary. There had been considerable speculation that the Assad government has encouraged the split, but while representatives of both factions were in the cabinet and the People's Assembly before the formal secession of the Turk group, none of the new secessionists has been so placed. Syrian Communists are not as numerous as Nasserites, and since their traditional recruiting ground (universities and schools) has been denied them, they pose no real threat to the regime. Soviet support, direct or through the party, can, however, be helpful. Syrian Communists have supported Assad against the Tlas group and indeed tried to calm near-civil

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, "Potential Trouble"; "The National Front," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 18 (1 May 1972), pp. 2-3; "Military Moves," *ibid.*, IV, no. 20 (14 May 1973), p. 1; "Syria-USSR: Crisis is Brewing," *ibid.*, IV, no. 30 (23 July 1973), p. 2; "Domestic Fears," *ibid.*, IV, no. 39 (24 September 1973), p. 2.

⁵⁶See Petran, *Syria*, p. 151, "Socialist Union Under the Leadership of Assad," *Al Hawadeth*, March 19, 1971.

war between the Assad and Jadid factions in 1969 even though Assad criticized Jadid for his concessions to Moscow. Bakdash, who does not hesitate to admit the greater appeal of Nasserite politics, is prepared to cooperate with Baath so long as it maintains its "progressive" approach.⁵⁷

Last of the official participants in the NPF, the Arab Socialists are Hourani Socialists, that is, remnants of Akram Hourani's old Arab Socialist Party. While they seek to exploit the popularity of his name and do, in fact, agree with Hourani on virtually everything, Hourani has disavowed the Arab Socialists (on the grounds of his firm principle not to support the Baath in any way). Hourani, the great reformist politician of modern Syria, still commands a considerable following.⁵⁸

The term, "National Progressive Front" should indicate that not all currents are represented. None of the traditionally conservative political trends in Syria, for example, is acceptable to the regime. Yet, such views are still current in the public. The Muslim Brotherhood has long had a following in Syria.⁵⁹ It continues a relatively high level of activity, especially in the Homs region, where, as we have noted, Muslim Brotherhood candidates easily won election in the spring of 1972. They are also active in Hama and Damascus. Saudi Arabia has sporadically financed Brotherhood activities, complicating Saudi-Syrian relations. The Brotherhood has also irritated the Assad regime: through they ran on the NPF ticket in the 1972 local elections, the Brotherhood appealed to Syrians to boycott the May 1973 legislative election. Moreover, the anti-Baath activities of Sheikh

⁵⁷ *Le Monde*, March 23, 1971; McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, pp. 248-249; Aryeh Yodfat, "The U.S.S.R., Jordan and Syria," *Mizan*, XI, no. 2 (April 1969), p. 87; "The Ba'th: Allergic to Advice," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, I, no. 27 (7 September 1970), p. 4; "The National Front," *ibid.*, III, no. 18 (May 1972), pp. 2-3; "Cautious Approach," *ibid.*, III, no. 32 (7 August 1972), p. 2; "Domestic Fears"; "SCP: Titoist Trends," *ibid.*, V, no. 5 (4 February 1974), pp. 3-4; *Al Moharrer*, January 1974, p. 12; Levy, "Communism in Syria," pp. 404-406; *An-Nahar*, 1 May 1969; FBIS, V (15 December 1974), p. 143.

⁵⁸ Petran, *Syria*, pp. 150, 155, 203, 230, 243, 250.

⁵⁹ Syrian Interior Minister Ali Zaza, recently responded to a question whether anti-regime groups were still active in Syria as follows: "which groups? do you mean groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood or others? None of them has any grassroots now, for the [Assad] regime reached the popular spirit...." Interview, *Al-Bayraq*, March 30, 1974. This vision is far removed from Syrian political realities, however.

Habanka and Sunni religious leaders are thought to have been organized or at the least aided by the Muslim Brotherhood.⁶⁰

Finally, Syrian politics has always allowed a great role for political independents. This is in some measure a function of the agrocities we discussed briefly above, i.e., of regional leaders who used no conceptual or ideological appeal, relying instead solely upon personal leadership throughout their region.

Another form of "independent" is the political leader or group linked with foreign interests. The Arab world, particularly in the Levant, is a transnational society, or, at the least, a society of nation-states uniquely subject to regional transnational pressures. Among these phenomena are political pressures, often exerted through transnational families or through individuals with personal or (often ephemeral) financial ties to other Arab polities. Because of the relative novelty of *Syrian* nationalism, these forces are singularly virulent in Syrian society. The Assad regime must often prepare itself (and communicate its policies) in the light of expected (or unanticipated but actual) pressures from Iraq, Saudi Arabia (sometimes working through the Muslim Brotherhood), Libya, and Egypt.⁶¹

The Military

Perhaps the most potentially effective interest group in Syria is the military. Though divided by national issues and trends, the military forces--and particularly the officer corps--have been homogenized, first as a result of social factors we have already discussed and, second, through the long series of political purges. Internal security (intelligence) functions are devoted to identifying anti-regime movements, trends, and individuals. Alawi solidarity also conduces to military unity. This is not to suggest that the armed forces are unified, for they are not. Rather, it suggests that on certain issues, such as budget allocations for the military or disengagement and other war/peace issues where significant unity does exist, the officer corps is in a uniquely powerful position to influence policy. It also suggests that to the extent differences *surface*

⁶⁰ *L'Orient Le Jour*, May 9, 14, 21, 28, 1973. "Syrian Front: Tense But Calm," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 51 (18 December 1972), pp. 2-3; "Sunnis' Urge to Rule," *ibid.*, IV, no. 12 (19 March 1973), p. 1.

⁶¹ An unusual feature of these transnational pressures is their visibility: The Beirut press provides a guide to the current views and inclinations of each major outside Arab state with a political following inside Syria.

they must be case in the framework of policy options, *not* regime alternatives.⁶² Syrian military interests are wide-ranging because "the army's roots...preserve its sense of social mission."⁶³ Thus, the armed forces often have strong feelings concerning social and economic issues. However, the military has been riven with different views on these issues and, as we have pointed out, is therefore less effective as a single interest group on socio-economic matters than on military concerns.

The Syrian armed forces are composed of an army, a navy, and an air force. Although manpower levels vary somewhat--at the time of this writing they have been significantly augmented--according to the tenor of relations on the Israeli front, the army is by far the largest of the services. All of them are Soviet-equipped and -trained. Thus, Syrian military training is based on only partially modified Russian strategic and tactical doctrine. Any doctrinal background imposes some sort of limitations on military forces, and Soviet doctrine's limitations were observable in the October 1973 War. The military is more concerned with and organizationally developed around defense. Its mobility is limited by Soviet doctrine on consolidating before advancing. Air defense is site-oriented and depends heavily on surface-to-air missile (SAM) defense. Syria has an integrated system of 40 sites of SAMS (four types). However, the technical level of military personnel is also a handicap. Syrian armed forces are not well educated. They come from an environment in which they have not been exposed to sophisticated technology. Moreover, the high rate of turnover has adversely affected overall capability. On the other hand, the Soviet Union has had adequate time to train a large number of Syrian officers and enlisted personnel, and they, in turn, have been exposed to increasingly advanced military equipment. All reports from the 1973 war suggested the Arab (including Syrian) armed forces demonstrated great improvement in sophisticated equipment. Syrian military preparedness is high, and the

⁶²Discussions with consultants; Vatikiotis, "The Politics of the Fertile Crescent," pp. 227-237. See also above.

⁶³Petran, *Syria*, p. 234.

Syrian army represents a significant defensive force. The air and naval forces⁶⁴ appear to have made less progress than the ground forces, which acquitted themselves very well.⁶⁵

The Syrian military demonstrates relative solidarity on issues such as the strategy of confrontation with Israel. Generally, the Syrian armed forces are "hawks," i.e., they favor greater military action and fewer concessions in the conflict with Israel. Agreements of any sort with the Zionist state are suspect. It can be presumed, too, that the armed forces leadership lobbies actively as in the past for a large share of the Syrian budget. Decisions of a political or economic nature that might undermine military effectiveness--e.g., by threatening sources of supply--would engender substantial opposition. As in most developing states, the Syrian military is jealous of its position as the most important (and most well funded) armed force. Thus, in spite of some fractionation on this issue when it applies to the Palestinians, the services actively oppose the establishment or arming of any group at such a level that it may threaten their position.⁶⁶

Internal security in the armed forces consists of (1) pervasive intelligence networks directed by persons trusted by Assad and (2) two types of units, the "Defense Companies" and the "Special Forces," directed by Assad's brother and cousin respectively. While Assad has been more tolerant of divergent opinions than the previous regime, he has not hesitated to use force to maintain his position.⁶⁷

⁶⁴In both these services educational handicaps have had a marked effect on improvement of effectiveness.

⁶⁵See any of the standard studies of the October War: Walter Laquer, *Confrontation: The Middle East War and World Politics* (London: Wildwood House, 1974); *Journal of Palestine Studies*, IV, no. 2 (Winter 1974); Riad N. El-Rayyes and Dunia Nahas, editors, *The October War: Documents, Personalities, Analyses and Maps* (Beirut: An-Nahar Press Services S.A.R.L., 1973); The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Strategic Survey 1973*; London Sunday Times Insight Team, *On the Middle East War* (London: Times Publishing, 1974). See also, Andrew Bordwicz, "Syria Opening Doors Despite War Threat," *Washington Star News*, November 17, 1974, p. A-6.

⁶⁶Consultant discussion; Riad N. El-Rayyes and Dunia Nahas, editors, *Guerrillas for Palestine: A Study of the Palestinian Commando Organizations* (Beirut: An-Nahar Press Services, S.A.R.L., 1974), p. 143. *The Arab World*, XXI, no. 5166 (28 March 1974), pp. 11-12; "Syria: Ball Starts Rolling."

⁶⁷*Svenska Dagbladet*, August 9, 1974, p. 3.

Socio-Economic Interest Groups

Ethnic-Religious Interest Groups. The most important of the many divisions of Syrian society is the ethnic-religious. Although Syria's Arabs comprise approximately 90 percent of the population (Kurds, Armenians, Turkomans, Circassians, Assyrians, and Jews amount to but 6 percent, 3 percent, 1 percent, 1 percent, and a few thousand, respectively), this fact suggests a homogeneity that does not exist. Syrian Arabs include several important religious minority communities, notably the Alawis. Religious diversity is even greater. Muslims constitute over 85 percent of the population, but they include Alawis (11-15 percent), Ismailis (1-2 percent), and other Shiite sects (1 percent), as well as the Sunnis (about 85 percent). Christians--including Greek Orthodox (Melkite), Syrian Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox (Gregorian), Maronites, Syrian Catholics, Greek Catholics, Armenian Catholics, Chaldeans, and Nestorians (Assyrians)--make up about 10 percent of the Syrian population. Remaining religious minorities include the Druzes (3 percent of the population), Yazidis, and Jews.

The Alawis make up between 11 and 15 percent of the Syrian population. They are a Shiite sect similar in some of their religious beliefs to the Ismailis but with greater Christian and pagan elements. Most Alawites live in Latakia province, but the process of dispersion of the Alawites is accompanying the national process of urbanization. Alawis consider themselves Muslims; many Sunnis--but, significantly, not the more conservative--so consider them as well.⁶⁸ Traditionally, Alawis have been held in contempt and discriminated against as poor, uneducated peasants by the Sunni landowners and Sunnis, generally. The results of this status are visible in the occasional outbursts of anti-Alawi demonstrations based upon an underlying Sunni resentment of Alawi control.

As a group, Alawis favor the continued progress of the Alawis' position in Syrian society. They tend to support secularism, but cluster most homogeneously on any issue that affects Alawi advancement. Currently, Alawis believe they would directly benefit from the socio-economic development of Syria. Previously, such development would only have increased the gap between the Alawi standard of living and that of the majority of

⁶⁸The best recent source on the Alawis is Hazen and Gubser, *Selected Minority Groups*, Chapter 1.

Syrians. Now, however, with Syria under Alawi control, Alawis can reasonably assume disproportionate attention will be paid to their welfare. (Moreover, they have already partially closed the development gulf separating them from the Sunnis.) We have described the evolution of recent Syrian history through which the minority Alawis have come to play such a large role in Syria. Under Assad, most key positions in the country are held by Alawis, though many figurehead posts with high visibility but little power have been transferred to Sunnis.⁶⁹

The Sunni majority of Syria has not demonstrated a cohesive determination to rid itself of Alawi domination. Nevertheless, as we have said, Sunni resentment over Alawi rule is unmistakable. The religious schism is discussed as an issue area below. However, it is important to recognize that Sunnis frequently oppose the current regime on the merits of non-religious issues, when, in fact, opposition is based on the Sunni desire to return Syria to Sunni rule. Conservative Sunnis lead the "opposition," and in the anti-regime demonstrations that have taken place to date, Sunni sheikhs and the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as representatives of religious purist regimes such as Saudi Arabia's and Libya's, have played a prominent role.

The Druzes were, with the Alawis, the major beneficiaries of the French *divide et impera* strategy. Like the Alawis, the Druzes came to have a disproportionate representation in Syria's most important political group, the army. Until 1966, the Druzes and Alawis worked together to improve their position in the army. Since the abortive Salim Hatun coup, however, the Druze role has decreased very considerably. As a group, Druzes and other minorities see secularism as in their interest in Syria. On such issues, Druzes will align with Alawis.

Syrian Christians are more educated, active, and affluent than their Muslim counterparts. While they participate in public affairs, Syrian Christians have been noticeable by the secularism of their public activities. Sometime collective actions as an interest group have included support for religious equality and opposition to favoritism toward Islam. They have consistently opposed the establishment of an official state religion.

Economic Interest Groups. There are several dichotomous divisions in Syrian society along economic lines: urban-rural, radical-conservative,

⁶⁹Abbas Kelidar, "Religion and State in Syria," *Asian Affairs*, p. 19.

and merchant- (middle class) peasant. To some extent, analysts tend to merge these conflicts, often combining the categories with groups previously discussed. Certainly, the fact that Alawis, for example, have been poor, rural social reformists is significant: it is not chance that led the Alawi-dominated neo-Baath to reforms that aimed at improving the lot of poor, rural Syrian classes. Yet, it should be recognized that the coincidence of interests is not complete. Thus, we shall briefly consider each of the interest groups.

The revolutionaries and reformists composing the "radical" wing of economic thought in Syria are not confined to the Baath Party. On the contrary, they cross party lines and are an important force in today's Syria. They support nationalization of industries, more consistent implementation of land reform measures already enacted, and generally a larger role for the public sector (in some cases, to the virtual exclusion of the private). Although the revolutionaries are not numerous in Syria, they do have a strong base within the Baath and Communist Parties and, therefore, exercise considerable influence.⁷⁰

Before about 1970, Syrian social structure, although not based upon economic classes, could be divided into an upper class of landowning aristocracy (Damascus and Hama) and wealthy industrialists (Aleppo), paralleled by *ulama*; a professional and clerical middle class that had begun to emerge after World War I; and the lower classes of laborers, peasants, and others. Traditionally, the middle class of merchants aspired to the position of the upper class, but the new middle class, composed of some scions of the upper class and, primarily, of those of lower class backgrounds, resented the old upper class. After some years of Baath-led social revolution in Syria, the position of the old upper class had been materially altered, its influence greatly weakened.

The rising new political and professional elite looks with suspicion on the members of the old upper group. The old urban commercial middle class, in which religious minorities are heavily represented and which traditionally admired and emulated the upper class, consequently finds

⁷⁰ Andrew Bordwicz, "Syria Opening Doors Despite War Threat," *Washington Star-News*, November 17, 1974, p. A-6.

itself in a precarious position and is likely to avoid any public acknowledgement of the formerly wealthy and powerful. The *ulama* have...made peace with the revolutionary regime....⁷¹

Prestige now lies in education and management. The new middle class of technicians, professionals, bureaucrats, and some merchants has successfully captured symbolic leadership. However, the new middle class does not have a class consciousness or a unified value system. In this respect, at least, the old upper class and merchants just outside it retain greater agreement and collective awareness. There remain upper and middle classes, but much of the membership--and capital--of both fled the country from the mid-1960s on. That a return movement is now in progress attests more to the continuity of economic interests than to an affection for the Baath.⁷²

The Syrian General Union of Peasants represents only Baath-sympathizers among the peasants. It has not even recruited around Hama or in the Jazira because peasants in those areas have had ties to Akram Hourani and Communists, respectively. The so-called "popular organizations"--of which the General Union of Peasants is one--are widely viewed as mere puppets of the Assad regime. "Peasant" leaders of the General Union are relatively well-to-do and are overt sympathizers of the regime. Given its role and membership, the Union does not exert any real pressure on the Syrian government.⁷³

The General Federation of Trade Unions is the only "popular organization" to antedate the Baath regime. Moreover, unlike other organizations in Syria, the labor union has consistently permitted the continued membership of the many non-Baathists who compose it. Houranists, Communists, and Nasserites are numerous. On the other hand, since 1964, the Trade Union Federation has been controlled by the regime. All political tendencies are allowed, but Baath predominance is exercised at the national level. About half the industrial labor force is in the General Federation of Trade Unions. Labor issues do rise through the pyramidal organization of the

⁷¹Nyrop et al., *Area Handbook*, pp. 66-67.

⁷²See Nyrop et al., *Area Handbook*; Petran, *Syria*; "Syrian Front: Tense But Calm"; "The Military in the Arab World: Syria," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, II, no. 28, 29 (12 and 19 July 1971), Backgrounders; Vatikiotis, "The Politics of the Fertile Crescent," pp. 226-227.

⁷³Petran, *Syria*, pp. 228-230.

Federation, but union and labor as a whole can scarcely be taken as an autonomous interest group on other matters.⁷⁴

Non-National Interest Group. A most unusual feature of the Syrian political system is the central role played in it by non-Syrians, *viz.*, by Palestinians living now in Syria. Palestinian power in Syria is not the result of military force. Rather, it is a function of the Syrian political self-image. "Most politically-conscious Syrians have held and continue to hold firmly to the conviction that Syria is the throbbing heart of Arab nationalism."⁷⁵

As a result of Syria's self-consciously leader role in Arab nationalism, the Palestinian cause is a central question, test (or proof) of Syria's position. Too, Syrians feel a personal link with Palestine as a part of greater Syria, of pre-partition Syria. Thus, the Palestinian view accorded great weight in Syria. Palestinians have pushed Syria to lead the rejection front--the resistance to any settlement short of the destruction of Israel and recreation of Palestine--and do not hesitate to use their moral influence. They were also used to buttress the Jadid regime. Jadid consciously created and armed Sa'iqa to reduce the relative monopoly of power in military hands and increase his own leverage. Hafez Assad, however, replaced the Sa'iqa leadership with Palestinians loyal to him; Sa'iqa has been under both regimes and will continue to be a creature of Syrian policy.

Syrian policy vis-a-vis the Palestinian resistance as a whole has varied as a function of immediate Syrian foreign policy goals and domestic needs. The government has not hesitated to restrict the resistance--or even prohibit it from undertaking operations against Israel--when such restriction conduced to the realization of other objectives. When Syria needed time to install SAM air defenses, for example, and did not want Israeli retaliatory air strikes, Palestinian operations from Syrian territory were stopped. Both Sa'iqa, which can be considered a Syrian organization, and the PLA brigade stationed in Syria are completely subject to Syrian control. The army supervises the Yarmouk Brigade, the regime Sa'iqa. Certain elements in the Syrian armed forces are particularly hostile to Palestinian freedom of action.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 230-232.

⁷⁵Nadav Safran, "Arab Politics, Peace and War," *Orbis*, XVIII, no. 2 (Summer 1974), p. 394.

On the other hand, Palestinian resistance leaders maintain very close relations with the other political groups in the National Progressive Front and with extremist and Jadidist factions of the Baath Party.⁷⁶ Sympathies throughout Syria are extremely pro-Palestinian, and any important Syrian action widely regarded as anti-Palestinian could certainly engender significant popular opposition, though minor infringements on Palestinian freedom of action are not likely to do so.⁷⁷

Issue Areas

Territorial

The two most important issues in Syrian life today are (1) the recovery of Syrian territory currently occupied by Israel (*vis.*, the Golan Heights), and (2) the resolution of the Palestinian question. These two issues are much more totally interwoven in Syria than in other Arab countries (even those--with the exception of Jordan--whose territory is occupied by Israel). Syrians cannot divorce the Palestinian territorial political problem from their own for a number of reasons: First, Palestine was part of the Greater Syria that is still a more real force of loyalty to many Syrians than the present-day state. Second, there are a great many Palestinian refugees living in Syria.⁷⁸ Third, Syrians have taken pride in their role as the Arab conscience; they more than others have remained loyal to the Palestinian cause as the badge of this role. Fourth, Syria has laid claim to the title of leader in the fight against Israel, a claim that integrates or, at least, has integrated the Palestinian and Arab (hence, Syrian) conflicts with Israel. Fifth, there are a number of political, economic, and social issues affected similarly by Israeli

⁷⁶By contrast, Tlas is considered anti-Palestinian.

⁷⁷Safran, "Arab Politics," p. 399; El-Rayyes and Nahas, editors, *Guerrillas for Palestine*, p. 143; "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions," p. 1; "Syrian Front: Tense But Calm," pp. 2-3; "Taking Sides," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, I, no. 25 (24 August 1974), pp. 3-4; "Syria and the Palestinians," *ibid.*, IV, no. 23 (4 June 1973), Background; "Jordan: Hussein's Peace Efforts," *ibid.*, IV, no. 6 (5 February 1974), p. 3; "The Commandos: Plan for Action," *ibid.*, IV, no. 7 (12 February 1973), p. 4; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 253-254.

⁷⁸There are approximately 250,000 Palestinian refugees in Syria.

occupation of Syrian territory and by the Palestine problem. Refugee questions⁷⁹ and resultant constraints on the demographic options available to Syria are but two of several such areas.

Occupied Territory and the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Syria's own territorial conflict against Israel is limited to the Golan Heights occupied in June 1967.⁸⁰ The public campaign to liberate the Golan has been unremitting. There is no evidence that a Baath government, humiliated by its poor military showing against Israel in 1967, has tried to soft-pedal the issue. Quite the contrary: Syrians were constantly reminded of the Israeli occupation and of the certainty that the occupied Golan would be retaken by Syria.⁸¹

Thus, the primary issue with respect to Golan has never been whether to accept its loss or seek its return. Instead, issues concerned the means and the timing of its recovery. Indeed, virtually all Syrians accepted the need for force in the effort. How to use force in victory--rather than in a 1967-like defeat--that was the problem.

The current set of issues that confronts Syrians on the Golan and Arab-Israeli questions includes the following: (1) should Syria follow a moderate or a rejectionist line? (2) should Syria engage in talks with Israel? (3) should Syria accept any partial approaches, even if linked to an overall settlement?

Individuals and groups within Syria are deeply divided on the direction Syrian policy should take. Syria's traditional "irreconcilable" status has been abandoned at least for the present. The debate today centers on the wisdom of this abandonment and alternative strategies. One group, led by Prime Minister Ayyubi, supports the Golan disengagement agreement negotiated in the spring of 1974 and looks toward a compromise over-all settlement with Israel. The other group, led by Foreign Minister Khaddam⁸² feels Syria should accept nothing less than total and immediate

⁷⁹Syria has over 100,000 Syrian refugees from the conflicts of 1967 and 1973, as well as 250,000 Palestinian refugees.

⁸⁰Additional territory occupied by Israel in October 1973 as well as some of the Golan land taken in 1967 have been relinquished to Syria.

⁸¹John Cooley, "Syria Opens Windows to the Outside World," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 27, 1971, p. 5.

⁸²This group includes Major General Ibrahim.

withdrawal. In practice, however, Khaddam has been more flexible when faced with concrete issues than his identified stand would suggest.⁸³

In favor of a settlement Ayyubi's supporters point to the military outcome of the last war, when virtually everything was in Syria's favor; the independability of Egypt; and the limited use of alliance with Iraq. They argue that the Soviet Union, as helpful as it has been, has always backed down to the U.S., while the U.S. will never let Israel be conquered. The conclusion of this group is that there will not be a better time for a settlement, and for the realization of Syrian objectives, than the present. Against a settlement various Syrians suggest that such a resolution in today's terms (with Saudi prominence) would mean an end to the Arab revolution. They are also concerned about the rise of U.S. prestige in this regard. Some see the outcome of the October War as a sign that Israel is "on the ropes" and can be knocked out eventually, and that the oil weapon will neutralize the United States.⁸⁴

Many of those supporting the immediate withdrawal position are not in fact prepared to accept any compromises with Israel at this time. Most Syrians probably still oppose negotiations with Israel. Certainly they still fear Israel.⁸⁵ There is a substantial body of opinion in favor of Syria joining a front of rejection composed of Iraq, Libya, and certain Palestinian elements⁸⁶ (such as the PFLP).⁸⁷ In fact, Assad has used this opinion, sometimes by capitalizing on tactical points of agreement to solidify his position, sometimes to strengthen his bargaining posture vis-a-vis Israel.⁸⁸ The disengagement agreement was a focal point of this

⁸³ John Cooley, "Syria-Israel Disengagement: Soviets Take Part This Time," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 1, 1974, p. 1; FBIS, V, no. 22 (January 31, 1974), F1. See also: "Syrian Baath Party Congress Begins Today: Internal Troubles Reported," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5215 (June 7, 1974), p. 5.

⁸⁴ Safran, "Arab Politics, Peace and War," pp. 396-398.

⁸⁵ "Is It a War of Attrition on the Golan?" *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5166 (28 March 1974), pp. 11-12.

⁸⁶ Cf. Joseph Kraft, "The Divided Arab World," *The Washington Post*, April 16, 1974, p. A-17.

⁸⁷ Ironically, Syria and the PFLP have had a very tumultuous relationship (see below).

⁸⁸ See "Syria: A Waiting Game," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 13 (April 1, 1974), pp. 1-2.

"hawkish" dissent, and it can be assumed that further agreements with Israel would face similar opposition.⁸⁹

In order to still dissension caused by the disengagement accord and the newly exhibited moderate tendencies, Assad's regime has insisted that the initial agreement and talks leading to and following from it have all been predicated on the direct and close link between these steps and both (1) total Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territory and (2) reestablishment of the rights of the Palestinian People. This conceptual connection is particularly important to Syria for another reason--viz., Israel's greater reluctance to relinquish the Golan Heights than to leave the Sinai or West Bank. The link between initial steps and ultimate goals has been supported as well by the United States⁹⁰ in order to provide firm ground deemed necessary to Assad's continued ability to negotiate. The Assad government, in control of all Syrian media, has spared no effort to communicate to the population the importance of disengagement as a step toward a Syrian victory. Indeed, the agreement itself was portrayed as a Syrian victory. Indeed, the agreement itself was portrayed as a Syrian victory in that the costs were depicted as few and the benefits--especially Israeli evacuation of some of the territory occupied in 1967⁹¹ including Kuneitra--great. In addition, Soviet support and Palestinian acquiescence were

⁸⁹The dissent was centered in the armed forces and some groups in the Baath. Both the negotiation of an agreement *per se* and the terms were debated before and after the fact. Marilyn Berger, "Mideast Signing Today," *The Washington Post*, May 31, 1974, p. A-1; Marilyn Berger, "Syria Seems Ready to Free POWs," *ibid.*, May 2, 1974, p. A-1; Bernard Gwertzman, "Kissinger is Given Syrian Proposals on Opening Talks," *The New York Times*, January 21, 1974, pp. 1, 6; *Bayrut*, June 7, 1974; "Syrian Ba'th Congress: Assad Criticized," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 24 (17 June 1974), p. 3; "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions," *ibid.*, V, no. 22 (3 June 1974), p. 1; "Syria: The Ball Starts Rolling"; *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5123 (28 January 1974), p. 7.

⁹⁰This is not to say the U.S. has formally committed itself to or supported total withdrawal. Rather, the link is viewed by the U.S. as being with the implementation of U.N. resolutions the meaning of which is at best ambiguous.

⁹¹Liberation of the 1967 territory was crucial to the agreement, since recovery of part of the occupied lands is symbolic of disengagement as a step toward total withdrawal.

sought to legitimize the agreement (and to shield it from radical and Palestinian-based criticism).⁹²

Palestine. As we have pointed out, the Syrian government has considered itself and has generally been viewed as the most consistent supporter of the Palestinian cause. We have also indicated the indissoluble link between the Palestinian issue and the larger Arab-Israeli and Syrian-Israeli questions. The questions Damascus has had to face in this area include (1) the extent to which political support should be furnished to the Palestinian cause; (2) the ends to the accomplishment of which this support should be provided; (3) the degree of military and logistical assistance to be provided Palestinian resistance forces and the purposes for which the assistance may be used; and, directly associated with each of these problems, (4) the specific Palestinian groups to be supported.

To date, Syria has consistently supported the Palestinian cause, even rejecting U.S. Security Council resolution 242 of November 1967. Assad came to power, however, over Palestinian resistance and after Sa'iqa and the Syrian-based PLA had been neutralized by the Syrian armed forces. Although Sa'iqa has now been taken over by the Assad regime there remains some influence in Palestinian wishes. The army continues to jealously safeguard its military role, a role the Palestinians have learned to accept. During periodic crackdowns on guerrilla activity, the Palestinians appeal through Iraqi or other sympathetic channels to Syrian opinion; they do not challenge Syrian authority to impose whatever restrictions may be promulgated.

Political support for Palestinians is, then, substantial, but unlimited only in the sense that the issue of political goals is scarcely joined. Assad claims he will not become involved in that latter debate. We shall see, however, that he hedges his bets.⁹³ For now, Syrian political support

⁹²"Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions"; "Syrian Ba'ath Congress: Assad Criticized"; "Syria's Crucial Position in Mideast Situation," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5129 (5 February 1974), pp. 11-12; "Baath Party Officials Launch Campaign"; "Syria-Israel: Where They Disagree," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 21 (27 May 1974), p. 1; Jim Hoagland, "Kissinger Plan Key to Syrian Shift on Talks," *The Washington Post*, March 3, 1974, p. A-25; Jason Morris, "Kissinger Breaks Syria Stalemate," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 28, 1974, p. 1. As will be discussed below, Iraq and Libya led opposition to the disengagement agreement.

⁹³See the Objectives and Policies section.

is for the recognition of Palestinian rights undefined.⁹⁴

Damascus has been much more circumspect in support beyond the political for the Palestinian cause. While Syrian territory has been used intermittently by the Palestinian guerrillas in operations against Israel and has been open to Palestinian military support of Syrian military operations, both have been intermittent and determined by strategic considerations of the Syrian-Israeli relationship or occasionally by other domestic factors. Syria has not since 1947 fought for the Palestinians. The pressure that exists within Syria to fight for the Palestinians can be and has been mollified by political support and the melange of Syrian-Palestinian justifications the government has used as a rationale for essentially national-interest actions.

Non-Human Resources

A major issue area since the advent of the Baath, and particularly since the 1966 neo-Baath coup ousting General Amin Hafez, has concerned the philosophy of economic development. Syria does not possess impressive oil reserves such as Iraq, or even more modest reserves like Egypt, and the limited amount of oil Syria does have is of rather poor quality. However, Syria does possess rich agricultural lands and, far from being overpopulated, has a modest population. Syria's traditional entrepreneurial class was not unlike Lebanon's, and French mandatory rule saw the development of similar economic and financial customs. We have already discussed the economic classes in Syria, and the process through which the poor-rural-minority-dominated Baath and then the more radical neo-Baath came to dominate the political system.

Under Baath rule, Syria adopted legislation intended to facilitate a socialist transformation. The political ramifications of this approach will be discussed below (see the status issue area), but the economic impact was more revolutionary. The neo-Baath sped up the land reform program,⁹⁵ moved forward on nationalization of major enterprises, and

⁹⁴Safran, "Arab Politics, Peace and War," pp. 394-396; Levy, "Communism in Syria," p. 399; "Syria-Jordan: A Much-Needed Detente," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 50 (11 December 1972), pp. 2-3.

⁹⁵Almost 30 percent of Syrian land has been expropriated and redistributed. Land transfer plans have been completed. Hazen and Gubser, *Selected Minority Groups*, pp. 81-82.

generally carried out such sweeping changes of the economic system that a very large proportion of the former upper classes emigrated to other Arab countries and elsewhere.⁹⁶ The success of Syria's economic revolution became a subject of considerable debate even within Baath councils. In spite of undisputable progress toward some economic and social objectives, major problems arose, and the cost of the flight of capital from Syria was greater and greater.⁹⁷ Political and social unrest between Alawis and Sunnis, moreover, cannot be dissociated from the neo-Baath revolution which seemed to Sunnis to discriminate against them.

Under Assad, economic pragmatism rather than economic revolution has been the catchword. A primary emphasis has been placed upon attracting private capital back to Syria, especially Syrian emigrant capital. We shall discuss this more fully in terms of Objectives and Policies. The result of this new approach to the economy, however, is a predictable controversy between the pragmatists and their allies, on the one hand, and the "radicals" or ideologues, on the other. Assad's moderate approach is backed by middle class elements and by many who have witnessed with dismay the flight of capital and the virtual disappearance of private sector investment. Syrian emigres have buttressed the new philosophy by responding to it, and the perennial dearth of foreign exchange reserves has been attenuated to some extent as a result. Thus, the liberal-socialist alliance seems to be prevailing over the radicals. At the same time, it is probable that many Alawis in power recognize that continued Alawi rule depends upon the generation of more urban Sunni confidence in the regime. Given the substantial investment in and progress of the Alawi community since 1963, the change in approach and emphasis, however difficult to initiate, should be less controversial within Alawi circles.⁹⁸

⁹⁶It should be noted that one large pre-Baath exodus occurred as well. In 1958, a large number of businessmen left soon after the formation of the United Arab Republic.

⁹⁷"The Military in the Arab World: Syria"; Hazen and Gubser, *Selected Minority Groups*, pp. 19, 81-82; Balta, "La Syrie Baasiste."

⁹⁸Balta, "La Syrie Baasiste"; Hazen and Gubser, *Selected Minority Groups*, pp. 81-82; Andrew Bordwicz, "Syria Opening Doors Despite War Threat"; "Syria: Relaxation Measures," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 13 (1 April 1974), Economics and Oil Section, p. 2.

Human Resources

Syria's human resources situation is almost unique among Middle Eastern countries. With no overpopulation problem and some very fertile land, Syria could be a rich agricultural country. So, at least, the common wisdom would suggest. However, Syria does have serious demographic problems aggravated by the refugee problem. And years of heavy defense spending have precluded much infrastructural and other investment that might have taken advantage of Syria's positive agricultural factors.

The completion of the Tabqa (Euphrates) dam will open vast new lands to irrigation and cultivation. The problem then will be, who will be the farmers? For the lands newly cultivable will require intensive farming in place of the extensive farming that has taken place there in the past. Indeed, much of Syria's agricultural populace will probably require resettlement or retraining over the next few years if optimum productivity is to be attained. However, as important and basic as these development questions are for Syria's agricultural population and for the country as a whole, the Arab-Israeli, Palestinian, and other economic and political questions have taken precedence to such a degree that there is scarcely any polarization on this issue.

The central human resource issue is sectarianism. Virtually since the inception of Baath power--i.e., even under Sunni Amin Hafez from 1963 to 1966--Sunnis have been concerned over favoritism shown Alawis and Alawi-populated areas. In May 1967, serious sectarian demonstrations took place. These demonstrations followed from an atheistic (but typically Baath) article in an army magazine. The crisis preceding the 1967 Arab-Israeli war overshadowed the demonstrations, and the "setback," as Syria and other Arab regimes referred to the outcome of the conflict, created sufficient shock and discontinuity that the sectarian issue was forgotten for a while. In spring 1972, religious unrest surfaced over a radio commentator's minor error in reporting a religious celebration. The following year saw several months' sporadic sectarian demonstrations, some resulting in violence. These activities began in January with the circulation of a new draft Syrian constitution that did not identify Islam as the state religion.⁹⁹ Riots occurred later, beginning in late February, when the

⁹⁹ Past constitutions had not done so either.

People's Assembly ratified the constitution, and again around the prophet's birthday in April.

In sectarian matters, Alawis receive tacit support from the sizeable Christian and Druze communities in Syria. To a large extent, moreover, religious issues are merely the surface rationale for unrest. Conservatives have tended to use the religious issue to mobilize anti-Baath and anti-Alawi sentiment. For this reason, sectarian issues often lead to the mobilization of Communist and Baath supporters of the regime who are anxious to prevent conservative gains.¹⁰⁰

Status

Status issues, which for Syria as for Egypt and Iraq are political issues for the most part, may be reviewed in terms of Syria's relations with (1) non-regional powers and (2) regional powers.

The Syrian relationship with the world outside the Middle East has been limited in recent years. After the Baath, and particularly since the neo-Baath, came to power, Syria became increasingly isolated, with ties of growing strength and number to the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies. Following the June (1967) War, disagreement over the degree of reliance on and the role of the Soviet Union continued as a major issue. Baath ideologues, Communists, and some other groups favored greater alliance on Moscow and the mutual severance of Syrian relations with regional "reactionaries." Some nationalists, however, with tacit support from conservative Syrian elements and groups within the military, argued in favor of turning more to cooperation of all Arab countries rather than to the Socialist commonwealth, and of placing more traditional limits on Syrian reliance on non-Arab supporters. Assad, for example, opposed the terms of some economic agreements with the Soviet Union, on the grounds that those ties were overly favorable to Moscow.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Levy, "Communism in Syria," p. 399; Rabinovich, *Syria*, p. 216; "Syria: Sunnis Urge to Rule"; Petran, *Syria*, p. 236; Kerr, "Hafiz Asad," pp. 703, 704; "Syria: Mounting Tension"; "Syrian-Libyan Relations: In the Doldrums?" *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 10 (5 March 1973), pp. 1-3.

¹⁰¹ Levy, "Communism in Syria," pp. 401-406, 408-409; McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, pp. 248-249; Yodfat, "The U.S.S.R., Jordan and Syria," pp. 83-89.

Prior to his final coup, Hafez Assad had been fairly consistently on the side of nationalists against the overreliance on and overgreat concessions to the Soviet Union. He had attacked the Jadid regime for improper contacts with the Soviet embassy, undue economic concessions to Moscow, and collusion with Syrian Communists. The army had acted openly against Syrian Communists and pro-Soviet elements throughout much of 1970. Yet, the Soviets did not hesitate to support Assad once his dominance in Syria became clear.

Since his accession to power, Assad has been placed in the position of supporting the Soviet Union against anti-Soviet elements, particularly in the military where Mustapha Tlas¹⁰² and Naji Jamil have served as focal points of agitation against Moscow.¹⁰³ Following the July 1972 Egyptian expulsion of Soviet advisors and other military personnel, a debate ensued in Syria over the future of the Soviet personnel in that country. Notwithstanding some problems that had arisen from time to time, however, Soviet-Syrian military relations never reached the level of animosity characterizing Soviet-Egyptian problems. Assad did more than strongly support the retention of Soviet personnel: he tried to serve as intermediary to bridge the Moscow-Cairo gap, and undertook new and substantially expanded military agreements with the U.S.S.R. by the terms of which some important Soviet strategic needs (unrelated to the Arab-Israeli conflict) previously met by Egypt would be filled by Syria.

Since the October 1973 War, Syrian-Soviet relations have been complicated by the new entry of the United States into the Syrian political scene. (We shall discuss current *policy* in the appropriate section below.) Renewal of U.S.-Syrian relations has not been the result of Syrian frustration with Russia. Indeed, while there have been intermittent problems of military supply, Assad believes and has consistently indicated that maintenance of strong ties between Moscow and Damascus is crucial to the realization of Syrian objectives. Thus, with the exception of the Tlas

¹⁰²Sometimes called the "Sadeq of Syria" for his Russophobia.

¹⁰³"Syria: Cautious Approach," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, II, no. 32 (7 August 1972), p. 2; "Syria: New Policy Lines," *ibid.*, III, no. 35 (28 August 1972), p. 1; "Syria-U.S.S.R.: Crisis is Brewing," *ibid.*, IV, no. 30 (23 July 1973), p. 2; El-Rayyes and Nahas, eds., *The October War*, pp. 178-180; "Syria: Two Years Under President Assad (1)."

anti-Soviet group in the military, Syrian-Soviet relations are not a major issue. Virtually all Syrians view the Soviet Union as the only dependable non-regional friend, the only country willing to supply the economic and military aid Syria requires in sufficient quantity and with relatively few (visible) strings. Insofar as Middle East issues are concerned, the Soviet Union is viewed as a tool, a tool useful and necessary for Syria. This role eclipses in importance bilateral considerations, so that when Soviet support is forthcoming on the Arab-Israeli issue there is no argument. When there is a difference on this key issue, both sides have concentrated on the points of agreement rather than those of discord.¹⁰⁴

The thaw in relations with the United States has been less uncontroversial than recent dealings with the Soviet Union. In spite of a reservoir of good feeling toward the United States and Americans (in general, Syrians can more easily identify with Americans than with Russians), (1) U.S. relations with and support of Israel, (2) suspicions about the trustworthiness of the United States and the reality of its new evenhanded policy, (3) ideological preferences, and (4) the recognition of the need for continued economic and military backing of the U.S.S.R. have led diverse groups to oppose the continued warming trend in Syrian-American relations.¹⁰⁵

For centuries, historians have observed a pattern in which Egypt and Iraq compete for Syria. That this pattern bears a striking resemblance to current Syrian politics cannot be gainsaid. Indeed, the error of viewing Egypt as the conservative or moderating force, Iraq the revolutionary, is that these positions have been much less stable than the rivalry itself. And since the Assad regime came into power in Damascus the roles of Cairo and Baghdad have represented moderation (flexibility) and radicalism (rigidity and isolation), respectively. Even before the definitive ouster of Jadid, however, Assad was Cairo's choice.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴*Svenska Dagbladet*, August 9, 1974, p. 3; *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5180 (18 April 1974), pp. 11-12; *An-Nahar*, March 1, 1974; *Al-Muharrir*, January 9, 1974; Jim Hoagland, "Kissinger Plan Key to Syrian Shift on Talks," *The Washington Post*, March 3, 1974, p. A-25; "Soviet Experts: Another Eviction?" *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 40 (1 October 1973), p. 1; "The Arab States: New Alignments," *ibid.*, IV, no. 48 (26 November 1973), p. 3; McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, pp. 247-253.

¹⁰⁵U.S. Congress, *The Middle East Between War and Peace*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶"Egypt's New Ally," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, I, no. 39 (30 November 1970), pp. 2-3.

Syria's relationship with Egypt has been a major issue within modern Syria, and the importance of the issue is underscored by Syria's inability to fight Israel alone--which means, in practice, Syria's need for a military alliance with Egypt at the time both (1) of full-scale hostilities and (2) of threat of force. Egypt's relatively moderate role since Sadat has come to power and the fluctuation of Egypt's relations with the Soviet Union during that same period have been troublesome for Syria whose role as the "Irreconcilable" and whose close ties to Moscow were both prejudiced, leading to domestic debates over the wisdom of following Egypt. At the same time, it should be pointed out that when Damascus did not follow Cairo--such as in the 1972 expulsion of Soviet advisors--the debate was no less strident.¹⁰⁷ For approximately a year between 1972 and 1973, Egypt and Syria were at odds, but sometime in the spring of 1973, when Assad and Sadat apparently took their decision to use war to prevent further solidification of the status quo, Syria's relations with Egypt--and others--were repaired, bringing about the familiar debate over dealing with "reactionary" Arab regimes.

Following the October War, which significantly improved Assad's domestic position, the debate was re-opened. Assad was careful not to follow Sadat's virtual *volte-face* in his relations with the superpowers, but the Syrian policy trend toward close coordination with Cairo and greatly improved relations with the United States was (and is) the subject of intense debate, mitigated only by the gradualness of the new policy toward the U.S. and the maintenance of close and cooperative ties to the Soviet Union. Bilateral negotiations and agreements between Egypt and Israel have aroused and will continue to excite Syrian suspicion and resentment. Generally, the same faction that supports negotiation (with Israel), disengagement, and a U.S. role in the settlement (Ayyoub's faction) favors coordination with Egypt. Khaddam's group, on the other hand, feels

¹⁰⁷In that case, the sides were also chosen on the basis of consequent benefits and costs to Syria: agreements reached soon after the Soviet departure provided more and better Soviet military materiel, especially in return for Soviet use of Syrian airfields for strategic purposes, special naval facilities at Latakia and Tartous (replacing Mersa Matruh in Egypt), and an increased presence and freedom of action in coordinating Syrian air defense. "Syrian-Libyan Relations," pp. 2-3; "Syria: Two Years Under President Assad (1)"; "Syria: New Policy Lines," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 35 (28 August 1972), p. 1.

Syria has already gone too far in pursuing Sadat-like policies. Syrian Communists, too, are alarmed by the drift toward cooperation with countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, even while recognizing the key role these states play in exerting indirect or direct pressure on Israel. Most of the leftist thought in Syria accepts some cooperation as necessary; but there is substantial attention paid to the Soviet view.¹⁰⁸

For the most part, Iraq's appeal is to those in Syria who oppose Egyptian policy and the Syrian cooperation with Egypt. Despite certain sectoral economic cooperation, military cooperation against Israel, Iraqi economic aid to Syria, Syrian political support for Iraq in its dispute with Iran, and strong pro-Iraqi interest groups in Syria, relations between the two Baath regimes have never been very good and have often been bitter. After the neo-Baath took power in Syria, Assad's faction often proposed reconciliation with Iraq, but since Assad gained power relations have not improved. Khaddam leads the Baath faction most interested in reconciliation now (in the course of its movement against negotiation with Israel).¹⁰⁹ The Soviet Union has frequently pressed for a Syrian-Iraqi-Palestinian alliance as a force for the furtherance of Soviet policy, and Soviet supporters in Syria have frequently been tied to pro-Iraqi factions. Iraq is the most potent anti-settlement factor in Syrian politics now that the PLO has moved toward a compromise with Israel. Thus, Iraq and Libya with the PFLP (and other Palestine groups) have tried to wean (or force) Syria to join them in a Rejection Front. Translated into Syrian political terms, pro-Iraqi and irreconcilable Palestinian elements dissent from--and impede--

¹⁰⁸"Assad Meets with Party Leaders," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5122 (25 January 1974); "Syria: Domestic Fears"; Safran, "Arab Politics, Peace and War," pp. 398-399; El-Rayyes and Nahas, eds., *Guerrillas for Palestine*, p. 296; *Al-Hawadith*, February 22, 1974; "Syria: A Waiting Game"; "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions"; "Syrian Ba'ath Congress: Assad Criticized"; *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 9, 1974, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹Rifaat Assad is also considered pro-Iraq.

the current Assad strategy.¹¹⁰ Of course, it cannot be overlooked in Syria either that Iraq's military power can be helpful and would be necessary in undertaking hostilities against Israel without Egypt.

The countries most important to Syria after Egypt, Israel, and the Soviet Union are Jordan and Lebanon. Syria's ties to Lebanon are ancient, the latter having formed part of traditional Syria. Many of the customs and much of the commercial philosophy of the two countries have been similar in the past, and personal and family ties are transnational. Lebanon and Syria have, however, been very different in their postwar history. Lebanon's military role in the region is minimal, although its commercial role, and in some respects its political situation, are of some importance. The transnational issue regarding Lebanon that has been aroused in Syria concerns the plight of the Palestinians. The Syrian government has usually given verbal backing to Palestinian complaints against the Lebanese government, and has occasionally resorted to economic measures to demonstrate support for the Palestinians.¹¹¹

Jordan has had a less fraternal relationship with Syria than has Lebanon. The two have a long-standing territorial conflict (although that dispute has not been very salient for the last twenty years). The Hashemite Kingdom has consistently been a primary verbal target of the Syrian political vocabulary. Long-standing tension between Palestinians, on the one hand, and the Jordanian government, on the other, resulted in a civil war in September 1970¹¹² ("Black September" to Palestinian guerrillas) in which

¹¹⁰ Indeed, the Syrian regime devotes considerable effort to defusing the potentially explosive Iraqi propaganda offensive. Levy, "Communism in Syria," p. 402; "Syria: Mounting Tension"; "Syria: New Policy Lines"; "Syrian Front: Tense But Calm"; El-Rayyes and Nahas, *Guerrillas for Palestine*, p. 296; "Syria's Crucial Position"; Jason Morris, "Kissinger Breaks Syria Stalemate," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 28, 1974, p. 1; Kraft, "The Divided Arab World"; "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions"; "Syrian Baath Congress: Assad Criticized"; "Bakr in Moscow: A Reply to Sadat," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 38 (18 September 1972), pp. 2-3; John K. Cooley, "Syria-Israel Disengagement: Soviets Take Part This Time," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 1, 1974, p. 1.

¹¹¹ Kerr, "Hafiz Asad," p. 705; *An-Nahar*, issues for spring 1973; "Lebanon-Commandos: New Formula Sought," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 27 (3 July 1972), pp. 3-4.

¹¹² The definitive study of the events of September is Paul A. Jureidini and William E. Hazen, *Six Clashes: An Analysis of the Relationship between the Palestinian Guerrilla Movement and the Governments of Jordan and Lebanon*.

Syrian armored units participated without air cover. As we have already noted, the Syrian operations in Jordan led to the final Assad coup in November 1970. Assad later sent the regime's second most powerful individual, Mustapha Tlas, to meet with the Jordanians. Tlas is a conservative Sunni with personal ties both to Jordan and to Saudi Arabia.¹¹³ Each attempt to improve relations with Jordan has been low-key and has encountered substantial opposition, especially among younger Baath military officers. Thus, Syria has not hesitated to use economic sanctions or allowed Palestinians to "punish" Jordan when the Jordan-Palestinian situation has worsened, even though relations between the two regimes have in fact been quite good under Assad. Until a Palestinian state is established, Syria's relations with Jordan will continue to be a highly salient and inflammatory issue in Syria.¹¹⁴

The new power in the Middle East is Saudi Arabia, but Saudi Arabia has been flexing its muscles in Syria for some time. With a population base to work from, conservative Muslim elements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, supported directly by Saudi Arabia, have actively taken part in opposing the Syrian Baath regime (see above, "interest groups"). The Saudis also have some good contacts within the Syrian military, including, as we have indicated, General Tlas, the Minister of Defense. Assad has made a consistent and concerted effort to win and maintain Saudi support, an effort unpopular among young military officers, the ideological left, the Baath ideologies, and many Alawis.¹¹⁵

¹¹³Anti-Soviet activities and Jordanian and Saudi intelligence collaborators have been linked to Tlas. "Syria: Two Years Under President Assad (1)."

¹¹⁴El-Rayyes and Nahas, eds., *The October War*, pp. 178-180; "Soviet Experts: Another Eviction?"; "Syria: Domestic Fears"; "Syria: Two Years Under President Assad (1)"; "Potential Trouble"; "Syria-Jordan: A Much Needed Detente," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 50 (11 December 1972), pp. 2-3; Kerr, "Hafiz Asad," pp. 702, 705; John K. Cooley, "Syrian Move Brings Praise--and Apprehension," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 4, 1972, p. 4; Jim Hoagland, "Syrian Leaders Call on Hussein to Join Battle Against Israel," *The Washington Post*, December 6, 1972, p. A-19.

¹¹⁵"Syria: Two Years Under President Assad (1)"; "Syria-Jordan: Much Needed Detente"; "Syrian-Libyan Relations: In the Doldrums?"; "Syrian Front: Tense But Calm"; "Syria: Domestic Fears"; El-Rayyes and Nahas, eds., *The October War*, pp. 178-180; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 253-254.

SYRIAN OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

OBJECTIVES

In the highly heterogeneous society that is Syria, consensus on national objectives--or even whether national Syrian (as opposed to national Arab) objectives should exist--cannot be expected. The following, then constitute objectives of the current Syrian regime:

- Recovery of Syrian territory presently occupied by Israel (Golan Heights)
- Maintenance of the current regime and, associated with that goal, development of popular support for the regime and government
- Resolution of the Palestinian issue
- Economic development of Syria, and, in support of that policy, the attraction of private and foreign government investment
- Maintenance and improvement of relations with Arab countries
- Improvement of economic, political, and social relations with the West
- Acceptable termination of the conflict with Israel.

POLICIES

In order to achieve its objectives, the Syrian government pursues policies--often controversial--that result from the decisionmaking process we have already reviewed. Because the objectives cited cut across any arbitrary boundaries and overlap (even contradict each other in some cases), we will consider policies in the four-dimensional framework employed for Egypt and Iraq--political, military, economic, and social.

Political Programs

Under the rubric of "political programs" we shall consider both domestic and foreign policies of the Assad government. Separation of domestic from foreign policies is arbitrary and misleading in that foreign issues--as we have seen--are frequently of domestic significance. Nevertheless, we shall first discuss questions of peculiarly internal Syrian politics.

Hafez Assad's primary domestic objective has been to preserve his regime and to establish its legitimacy. To this end, the president has endeavored to build a constitutional foundation in the "permanent

constitution" promulgated in 1973. Moreover, added legitimacy is sought in the direct election of the president by universal suffrage.¹¹⁶ In order to build broad, popular support behind his regime, Assad has (1) introduced democratic reforms, (2) undertaken new economic policies more in line with majority Syrian wishes and values (described under "economic programs"), and (3) opened the legislative and public political arenas up to parties other than the Baath. Democratic reforms include the popularly elected People's Council and local councils, greater political freedom, and more honesty in government.¹¹⁷ Assad refers to his 1970 coup d'etat as a "corrective movement," suggesting the continuity of Baathism. However, from the time of the coup to the present, the president has placed heavy emphasis on the relaxation of internal security measures and the reduction in the government's isolation from the people.¹¹⁸ The visibility and importance of the secret police have been reduced,¹¹⁹ as have the stridency of public discussion and the extreme secularism of the Baath party.¹²⁰ Indeed, the role of the Baath party itself has been decreased, partly because of the history of the Assad-Jadid conflict,¹²¹ and partly because Assad recognizes and wishes to reduce his vulnerability that derives from the conservative Sunni suspicions of the "Godless Baath."

The inclusion of non-Baath parties in the People's Council and National Progressive Front was only part of Assad's attempt to broaden

¹¹⁶A Syrian political "first." Balta, "La Syrie Baasiste."

¹¹⁷*The Daily Star* (Beirut), March 18, 1971.

¹¹⁸Baath Party Provisional Regional Command Statement, FBIS (17 November 1970), pp. F1-F4. Jebran Chamieh, ed., *Record of the Arab World (Documents, Events, Political Opinions)* (March 1971), pp. 1584-1585.

¹¹⁹Jesse W. Lewis, Jr., "Syria Makes Cautious Overture to West," *The Washington Post*, August 26, 1971, pp. H-1, H-7. Reduction of the police role should not be taken to mean Assad has reduced the level of security forces protecting the regime. On the contrary, he has added "Special Forces" (of about 30,000 men) led by his nephew, Adnan Assad, to the "Defense Squads" led by his brother, Rifaat Assad. Both are clearly regime security forces. "Syrian Front: Tense But Calm."

¹²⁰Nyrop et al., *Area Handbook*, p. 165; Ma'oz, "Attempts at Creating," p. 404. Baath secularism now has returned to the emphasis on the importance of Islam in Arab culture.

¹²¹Thus, the Baath is scarcely a coherent and effective political organization any longer. See Lewis, "Syria Makes Cautious Overture."

the base--which is to say, to increase the representativeness--of his regime. Equally important, anti-Baath groups have not been overlooked in cabinets: Assad has made a real effort to secure popular unity behind his government, to make it "a government of the people."¹²²

The reduction of domestic revolutionary rhetoric has carried over to domestic coverage of foreign affairs. Assad has curtailed much of the polemic in the public media. His effort to develop better relations with *all* his Arab neighbors has been attended by a noticeable decline in the temperature of public political discourse on foreign affairs.

To date, Hafez Assad's approach to governance of Syria has shown positive results. Clearly the most popular regime in the country for many years, Assad's government has also been characterized by a stability remarkable by Syrian standards. None of the major figures in the regime has been removed. The Baath Regional Command in power in May 1971 after Assad became president included five generals--Assad, Tlas, Khleifawi, Jamil, and Abdul Ghani Ibrahim. Other than Khleifawi, the popular leader who was forced by illness to leave government, all of these remain key figures in the present Syrian administration.

While we do not propose to discuss foreign policy considerations in the context of domestic political programs, a significant policy change under Sadat has been the approach taken to the conflict with Israel. Where previous governments had insisted on military confrontation and on the unacceptability of a peaceful solution, Assad softened this stand virtually from the time he ascended to the direction of the government. Often assailed by Jadid for his desire to concentrate on the development of the armed forces before undertaking hostilities with Israel, Assad all but formally accepted Resolution 242 of the Security Council after his coup. And following the 1973 war, Assad accepted Resolution 338. Later, his government with Israel entered into negotiations that culminated in a disengagement agreement. This approach is a radical departure. Domestically, Assad's policy is characterized by a totally different perspective in the media. The Syrians have secured Soviet support and now accuse *Israel* of wanting war, suggesting that recurrent hostilities

¹²²Balta, "La Syrie Baasiste"; "Syria: The New Cabinet"; Cooley, "Syria Opens Windows."

between Israel and her Arab neighbors benefit Israel through Zionist expansion. Thus, "we Arabs must put an end to the chain of wars."¹²³

As we have pointed out, Syria's primary concern in its confrontation with Israel is the recovery of the Golan Heights occupied by the latter in 1967. There are major differences of opinion among the Syrian population as regards various issues between the two countries. With respect to Golan, however, there is no such difference. All Syrians want, demand, and expect return of the Golan to Syrian control. Cession of any part of the Golan, even in terms of a long-term lease, is unacceptable to virtually any Syrian. Syrian sovereignty and the termination of Israeli control over the Heights are a *sine qua non* of any settlement. The incessant public insistence by Syrian leaders on return of the Golan is sincere; no agreement is possible for less.¹²⁴

The straightforward Golan issue explains much of Syrian policy. It explains Syria's rejection of the negotiation concept after 1967, for Syrians were convinced that Israel would never agree to return the Golan. Thus, negotiation was rejected because it would reduce Arab support for Syria (as others' needs were met). This also explains Syria's insistence on rejection of the concept of "minor adjustments" to the pre-June 5 borders, since Golan (it was felt by Syrians) would be one such sacrifice.¹²⁵

Given the determination to reacquire the Golan, one can understand the importance the Syrians have placed on blocking any solidification of the status quo. Syrian spokesmen have attacked Israel's demand for secure borders, probably not so much from lack of understanding as from thorough understanding of the logical conclusion--that much of the Israeli-occupied Golan would be claimed by Israel as necessary to security.¹²⁶ This, too,

¹²³*Al-Jaish al-Shaab*, October 7, 1974. Similarly, the Disengagement Agreement was defended as an Israeli retreat, an Arab victory. *Al Baath*, June 3, 1974.

¹²⁴See, e.g., Assad's interview by Milhem Karam, *al Bayraq*, February 21, 1974; his earlier interview in *an Nahar*, March 17, 1971; "Is It a War of Attrition?"; Petran, *Syria*, p. 201; "Syria's Crucial Position in Mideast Situation," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5129 (5 February 1974), pp. 11-12; Seymour Topping, "Egypt and Syria Divided on U.S. Peace Proposals," *The New York Times*, December 18, 1974, pp. 1, 17.

¹²⁵"Syria's Ayoubi Demands Israel Get Off Arab Land," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 12, 1973, p. 2.

¹²⁶For example, cf., the interview with Syrian Information Minister George Saddiqni, *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 9, 1974, p. 3.

is the basis for Syria's demand that disengagement be explicitly tied to a peace settlement requiring withdrawal to pre-June 5 boundaries.¹²⁷ While the disengagement accord was so linked to the satisfaction of the Syrians,¹²⁸ later problems in negotiations have reinforced Syrian doubts concerning the likelihood of a peaceful settlement including restoration of the Golan. Thus, Syrian Golan refugees have not returned in any number to that portion of the Golan returned through the 1974 disengagement accord. There are several reasons for their retaining refugee status,¹²⁹ but the continued depopulation of the Golan effectively underscores the proximity of war and the readiness of the Syrian government¹³⁰ to accept it as a means of regaining control--or ending Israeli occupation--of Syrian territory.

Recognizing the balance of forces, Syria has from the outset insisted upon an Israeli guarantee of total withdrawal *before* entering "negotiations." Since such a guarantee is unlikely to be realized, Syria will continue to demand it.¹³¹ At the same time, as after 1973, Syria will discuss interim

¹²⁷ See Foreign Minister Khaddam's statement in "Saudi Arabia and Kuwait Give Syria Pledge on Oil Embargo," *The New York Times*, February 5, 1974, p. 3.

¹²⁸ The recent disengagement agreement meets this criterion by being tied to Resolution 242, which *Syrians* view as requiring withdrawal from *all* occupied territories. In other words, the ambiguity of the resolution has been employed to bring about a disengagement agreement acceptable to both Israel and Syria.

¹²⁹ Israel destroyed Kuneitra before withdrawing in 1974. To rebuild it would be expensive, especially with Israeli guns on surrounding hills threatening the new city. Topping, "Egypt and Syria Divided," p. 17; FBIS, no. 124 (26 June 1974), p. H9; *Al Baath*, September 17, 1974, p. 1. Second, it should be recalled that Kuneitra's population increased to some extent as the area was militarized. Many inhabitants were armed forces personnel and dependents. With the present order of battle, it is unlikely many military dependents will move to Kuneitra, in effect *beyond* the front lines. Many other inhabitants were farmers, tending land still occupied by Israeli troops. The proximity of the front is a disincentive to resettlement in Kuneitra for all former inhabitants, particularly since Israeli military forces are ensconced on the surrounding hills. *Al-Baath*, September 17, 1974, p. 1.

¹³⁰ As both sides recognize, the pressure of a sizeable Syrian population in the Golan would add to the costs Syria would have to bear in the event hostilities broke out once again.

¹³¹ John K. Cooley, "Syria Hopes Kissinger Brings Pullout Solution," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 26, 1974, p. 2. The fact that Israel has set up 30 new settlements in the Golan, several of them built on the remains of Syrian towns, is well known in Syria as in Israel, and does not facilitate negotiation. See, e.g., John K. Cooley, "Syria-Israel Disengagement: Soviets Take Part This Time," *ibid.*, February 1, 1974, p. 1.

agreements looking *toward* withdrawal and negotiation.

We have already described the fundamental change in Syrian policy toward Israel. Before the Assad regime, Syria led the opposition to peaceful settlement, rejecting Security Council Resolution 242.¹³² From its inception, the Assad regime has looked upon peaceful settlement as the preferable approach,¹³³ assuming Israel would relinquish territory occupied in 1967 and recognize the rights of the Palestinians.¹³⁴ Moderation was no more successful than the extremist policy Syria had followed theretofore, however, and when Egypt's attempt to secure American backing for progress failed, Assad was prepared to consider war. Indeed, the new Syrian position facilitated war planning, for agreement on objectives was easy--war aims were limited, and the destruction of Israel was not even considered.¹³⁵ Nor has Syrian policy reverted to its pre-Assad "irreconcilable" image. Since the October 1973 hostilities, the Syrians have consistently and publicly favored peace talks. (This acceptance implicitly means the acceptance of Israel's existence).¹³⁶ As we have seen, today Syria suggests it is Israel that favors war, while "we are above all for a political solution."¹³⁷

¹³²It should be pointed out that Assad, even before his coup, was in favor of reducing the level of confrontation. "Syria could no longer afford the luxury of threatening Israel and playing at extremism; 'it would be better,' [Assad] said, 'to refrain...from...gratuitous acts of provocation which the enemy could use as a pretext to challenge the Syrian Army and force upon it a battle which it is in no position to undertake...." Kerr, "Hafiz Asad," p. 699.

¹³³See Khaddam's press conference, March 13, 1971, in Jebran Chamieh, ed., *Record of the Arab World*, March 1971, pp. 1586-1587, in which the foreign minister avers that war will be necessary because Israel is not amenable to peaceful settlement: "The Arabs have tried to pursue a course leading to a peaceful settlement." Assad had just previously suggested Syria was ready for negotiations. "The Soviet Union and the Arab World (3)," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 23 (5 June 1972), Background.

¹³⁴John K. Cooley, "Syria Joins Arab 'Peace Policy'," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 10, 1972, p. 3.

¹³⁵Laqueur, *Confrontation*, p. 54. See also "Hussein's Peace Efforts," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 6 (5 February 1973), p. 3.

¹³⁶U.S. Congress, *The Middle East Between War and Peace*, p. 28; Raymond H. Anderson, "Syrians Cautious on Hopes for Talks," *The New York Times*, March 1, 1974, p. 7. Assad has, however, stressed Syria is engaged in peace talks, not negotiations. FBIS, October 30, 1973, pp. F1-F6. *Al Baath*, September 17, 1974, pp. 1, 7.

¹³⁷Minister of Information Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad, October 11, 1974, FBIS, no. 203 (October 18, 1974), p. H3.

That Assad's change in Syrian policy on a peaceful settlement rests on values fundamentally different from Jadid's must be clear. Jadid's Syria was isolated in the Arab world (except for the Palestinians). Syrians felt the Egyptians or Jordanians might reach a separate accord with Israel; indeed, both might. Since Israel was less concerned about Sinai and the West Bank than about the Golan, either Egypt or Jordan or both might settle, but nothing short of war could bring back the Heights. No one even seriously tried to persuade Syria to accept a peaceful solution.¹³⁸ The new leadership placed a high priority on Arab cooperation. And indeed the Syrian position in a bargaining framework depends upon Arab unity, depends upon Egyptian-Syrian coordination and mutual support. Assad has been prepared in the past to disrupt Egypt's attempts at settlement,¹³⁹ not because he opposes a settlement but because he recognizes Syria's need for the Egyptian alliance in order to recover Golan. Syria's position as foremost protector of the Palestinians and Syria's untarnished reputation (as contrasted with Jordan's) both as a confrontation state and as an Arab country with occupied territory, subject Egypt to potential political danger in negotiating with Israel. Thus, Egypt, as we have pointed out in Chapter 2, is intensely aware of and extensively participates in Syrian Domestic political debates over Arab-Israeli strategy.¹⁴⁰

When Egypt, Jordan, and to a lesser extent other actual or potential Arab allies seem to be moving toward a position that will remove them from their potential role as a Syrian bargaining resource, they can expect Syrian attacks.¹⁴¹ Syria's current strategy is to actively enlist the aid and cooperation of all who could apply pressure on Israel directly or indirectly--Egypt, Jordan, and the oil-producing states of the Arab/Persian Gulf.¹⁴² Needing Egyptian support and maximum Arab unity to achieve its

¹³⁸"Growing Isolation," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, I, p. 14 (8 June 1970), p. 1.

¹³⁹See "Embarrassing Partner," *ibid.*, III, no. 49 (4 December 1972), p. 1.

¹⁴⁰E.g., Zohair Mohsen's attack on Egypt, *An-Nahar*, February 6, 1974, pp. 1, 12.

¹⁴¹See also *Al-Hawadith*, February 22, 1974. Sadat's treatment in Syria following the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement was very cool. Bernard Gwertzman, "Kissinger Is Given Syrian Proposals on Opening Talks," *The New York Times*, January 21, 1974, pp. 1, 6.

¹⁴²"Saudi Arabia and Kuwait Give Syria Pledge on Oil Embargo," *The New York Times*, February 5, 1974, p. 3.

aims of recovery of the Golan and a peaceful settlement sometimes forces Syria to make greater sacrifices than its leadership would like in order to maintain Arab solidarity.¹⁴³ On the other hand, recognizing that Israeli strategy places a premium upon the breaking up of the Arab coalition, and, particularly, on dividing Egypt and Syria, the latter sometimes have found that the only way to maintain unity and support is to threaten war.¹⁴⁴

Syrian policy, then, is to marshal as much Arab unity as possible, but above all Egyptian and Saudi support. The Syrians do not mind Egypt taking the lead, yet they do not want Egypt to go too far toward a settlement that would leave Syria to fend for herself.

Another major element in Syrian policy toward Israel is to secure Soviet support. Such backing is necessary not only because Syria's military forces depend upon Soviet materiel, training, and support; also because of the exigencies of domestic Syrian politics.¹⁴⁵ Thus, while Syria does not subordinate its own policies toward Israel to those of its superpower provider, Damascus' positions are certainly strongly influenced by Moscow's. Moreover, Syria cannot attempt either war or peace policies seriously or effectively without Soviet support.

Currently, Soviet policy views the Geneva conference, under the joint chairmanship of the United States and the U.S.S.R., as the best vehicle for a settlement in accordance with Moscow's interests. Soviet superpower status would thereby be underscored, and the Soviet Union might be able to exercise considerable influence on the outcome. This policy is very much in line with Syrian interests as well, for a multilateral framework brings the Arab alliance (and solidarity) into Syria's bargaining hand, ensures Egypt is not proceeding too far toward a separate accord, and if Palestinian presence were effected, would reduce Assad's vulnerability to the Palestinians and to his countrymen.

Whatever the forum of settlement progress, Syrian policy stresses the importance of the threat or use of force as the talks proceed. The clearest

¹⁴³"Syria: Ball Starts Rolling," p. 1.

¹⁴⁴Joseph Kraft, "The Divided Arab World," *The Washington Post*, April 16, 1974, p. A-17.

¹⁴⁵"Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions"; "Syria: Moscow Helps Out," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 29 (17 July 1972), pp. 3-4.

example of this policy was in the extended hostilities around Mt. Hermon preceding the conclusion of the disengagement agreement in spring 1974. "Fighting while talking" confers several benefits: It reduces the strength of domestic groups opposing settlement and favoring resumption of hostilities. It adds to the pressure on Israel. It maintains readiness. It forces Israel to absorb higher costs in continued occupation. It demonstrates the unacceptableness of the *status quo*.¹⁴⁶

To what could the status quo give way? Syria's views of the shape of an acceptable settlement are ambiguous. Given the bitterness of the internecine policy debate, it is unlikely Syria will take the initiative. Rather, Syrian leaders will respond to Israeli initiatives, try to refine proposals that hold out the possibility of success. Generally, Assad will accept a demilitarized Golan or even one occupied by international forces. He is prepared to end the state of belligerency with Israel, recognize it, and may even establish diplomatic and commercial relations, although these he would prefer to broach separately. Israeli forces must withdraw totally from occupied Golan, possibly in stages, but not over an extensive period. Although Syrians have pointed out that neither demilitarization nor continued occupation is of avail in preventing violence in an age of missiles, Assad has already given indications of his willingness to accept international forces in the Golan. Syria will not take a firm position on the Sinai front or on Jerusalem. With respect to the Palestinian question, Syria defers to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and other Palestinian sentiment.¹⁴⁷ It is likely that Assad will continue to search for means to disarm his perceived potential opponents. Certainly he can be expected to require Soviet approval at each step, as well as some sort of Palestinian "blessing." Moreover, Assad will give substantial weight to

¹⁴⁶"Syria's Crucial Position," p. 11; *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 9, 1974, p. 3; Henry Kamm, "Syrian Guns Seen in Political Role," *The New York Times*, March 21, 1974, p. 11. See also Assad's speech to the Baath, April 17, 1974, FBIS, no. 68 (18 April 1974).

¹⁴⁷Topping, "Egypt and Syria Divided," p. 17; Raymond H. Anderson, "Damascus is Linking Disengagement to Recovery of all Golan Territory," *The New York Times*, February 25, 1974; "Syria's Ayoubi," p. 2. See the interview of Assad, by Arnaud de Borchgrave, *An-Nahar*, June 3, 1974.

the opinions of his Minister of Defense, Mustapha Tlas, and Foreign Minister Abdul Halim Khaddam.¹⁴⁸

Rather than align Syria with a rejectionist front or take the lead among the moderates on the Arab-Israeli (and occupied territories) issue, Assad will probably (1) continue to attack those who move far ahead of him in coming to terms with Israel; (2) refuse any credit to Israel for the outcome of agreements Syria may reach; (3) claim a Syrian victory (i.e., a victorious zero-sum game) for any such agreements; (4) confront Israel militarily, politically, and economically in every possible way during the negotiations; and (5) take few initiatives and make very few initial compromises, opting instead to deal on others' terms and his own (Syria's) oft-stated basic objectives. This approach facilitates defense of on-going bargaining, and has been used to defend past negotiations. In view of the relatively weak Syrian bargaining position vis-a-vis Israel, Syria would much prefer to deal from the strength of a united Arab front that includes Egypt and Jordan, as the two other Arab belligerents bordering on Israel, Saudi Arabia, as the financial backbone and the country with leverage on Israel's primary external support, and the Palestinians. The latter are necessary for domestic reasons; Iraq's support is desirable for similar purposes, but not necessary. Recognizing his country's weakness alone--it is not a credible military threat without Egypt--Assad will go to considerable lengths to preserve unity, including the sabotage of individual initiatives that might reduce collective influence.

The death of Gamal Abdel Nasser changed Egypt's position in Syrian politics. Where Egypt had been the key actor before, it assumed a much less influential role. Anwar Sadat was not the charismatic or dynamic leader that Nasser was.¹⁴⁹ Yet, Assad has been closely linked to Sadat for years. When Egyptian-Soviet relations were strained in mid-1972, Assad assumed much of the burden of restoring cooperation between Syria's

¹⁴⁸The former's acceptance or rejection will be critical. In Khaddam's case, more attention will be paid to specific problems or requirements he may raise in any given package.

¹⁴⁹Indeed, it has been suggested that Syria joined the Federation of Arab Republics to strengthen Egypt. Leonard Binder, "Transformation in the Middle Eastern Subordinate Subsystem after 1967," *The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East*, Michael Confino and Shimon Shamir, eds. (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1973), p. 259.

superpower supporter and cross-Nile ally. At the same time, Syria temporarily eased restrictions on Arab guerrillas (commandos) and Sa'iqa began to take a more militant stand within the resistance. This combination of pressures was designed to demonstrate the necessity of considering the Golan Heights in any approach to peace (and thus to discourage movement toward a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace).¹⁵⁰

As we have pointed out, Syria needs Egypt for a credible threat to Israel. At the least, Syria cannot stand alone. The only other regional power with reasonable size is Iraq, but Iraq is not Egypt's match. Moreover, the Syrian populace has been attracted more to Egypt than to Iraq, and Damascus has often looked to Cairo as a counterpoise to Baghdad.¹⁵¹

Following the failure of Sadat's attempt to produce movement on the occupied territories issue through Washington in 1972-1973, and in line with Assad's espousal of more limited objectives than his predecessors, the governments began consultation and planning for the joint military operation launched in October 1973.¹⁵² While Assad has criticized Sadat concerning some of the aspects of the management of the war, particularly the timing of the cease-fire, the criticism has been mild and has apparently been intended at least partially for domestic purposes.¹⁵³ Since October, the strains on the Egyptian-Syrian alliance have been great as a result of the dynamics of the settlement process. In other words, since Assad needs and wants his Egyptian ally to lead the way, but fears the latter will lead by too much, the relationship of the two leaders is one of intermittent mutual reinforcement and suspicion. When Sadat takes the initiative he may enjoy tentative Syrian support; as his movement gathers momentum the Syrians fear a "separate deal" that will take Egypt out of the common front Syria requires. At this point, Syrian warnings surface, Syrian media criticize Egypt, and Syrian-sponsored groups like Sa'iqa issue similar cautionary statements. Because the post-1973 period has

¹⁵⁰"A Front Reopened," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 38 (18 September 1972), p. 1.

¹⁵¹"Syria and Russia: Pink Balloon," *The Economist*, October 7, 1972, p. 27.

¹⁵²Laqueur, *Confrontation*, p. 54.

¹⁵³See Assad's October 29 speech, FBIS, October 30, 1973, pp. F1-F6.

been characterized by an Egyptian turn to the United States, some of the Syrian reservations include suspicion of U.S. motives, criticism of the speed with which Egypt has begun to rely on the United States and reminders of the steadfast Soviet support of the "Arab cause."¹⁵⁴ That Syria should take such a position is hardly surprising, for Syria has fewer viable immediate alternatives to Soviet support than has Egypt. Nevertheless, Syria seeks to maximize mutual Egyptian-Syrian interests within the parameters of a settlement along the lines favored by Syria such as we have described above.

Jordan's troubled relations with the Palestinian movement¹⁵⁵ have complicated the Syrian-Jordanian relationship. The Palestinian cause is important in Syria, as we have seen, where support for the cause is a matter of deepest faith; and the bitter Palestinian feelings resulting from the September 1970 Jordanian civil war have placed a constraint on Syrian policies toward Jordan. In 1970, Syrian armor intervened in Jordan,¹⁵⁶ but the ambivalent and ill-coordinated (or uncoordinated) thrust was aborted at least largely due to the opposition of Assad who within three months took over the leadership of Syria. Assad's orientation and policies regarding Jordan were almost diametrically opposed to Jadid's. Ever conscious of the potency of the Syrian Palestinian constituency, and therefore offering nominal support to the Palestinians, Assad sought to improve relations with Jordan immediately after he acceded to power. Nor has Syria put forth challenges of regime significance in Amman since. While it is true that Syria closed its borders with Jordan during the July 1971 Jordanian mop-up of the civil war, and left them closed for

¹⁵⁴Gwertzman, "Kissinger is Given Syrian Proposals"; "As-Sa'iqa Leader Criticizes U.S.-Egyptian Contacts," FBIS, no. 31 (12 February 1974), p. F10; *al Hawadith*, February 22, 1974; "Syria: A Waiting Game"; Kraft, "The Divided Arab World"; *Svenska Dagbladet* interview with Georges Saddiqni, August 9, 1974, p. 3.

¹⁵⁵The best analysis of these relations is Jureidini and Hazen, *Six Clashes*.

¹⁵⁶The intervention followed from (1) Syrian determination not to be the new home of the guerrilla forces (not to turn a Jordanian-guerrilla conflict into a Syrian-guerrilla conflict), (2) the urge of the Alawis to demonstrate their "revolutionary virtue," and (3) a direct concern about the Palestine movement. See Jureidini and Hazen, *Six Clashes*, p. 157, and Stephen Oren, "Syria's Options," *The World Today*, XXX, no. 11 (November 1974), p. 474.

about a year and a half, this action should not be allowed to overshadow the fact that the Syrian government made considerable efforts to improve both its own relations and those of the resistance with Jordan.¹⁵⁷ All evidence suggests that Assad was enormously relieved to be able to reopen the borders on December 1, 1972, with such widespread Arab support for the action. The justification employed by Damascus for reopening borders--even though Palestinian guerrillas continued to view the Hussein government with almost bitterness and fury than was directed at Israel--was unity, unity against Israel.¹⁵⁸ Since the lifting of the border measures, relations between these Arab neighbors have been good. Although Jordan was a reluctant and minor participant in the October hostilities, Jordanian soldiers saw action on the Golan front. Syria has continued to support the Palestinian cause, but has not been confronted with the kind of zero-sum game that arose in September 1970 and July 1971. The issue of representation of the occupied West Bank Arab (Palestinian) population pits Jordan against the PLO, but the whole of the Arab world is involved in

¹⁵⁷ Binder, "Transformation," pp. 256-257; Kerr, "Hafiz Asad," p. 705; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 253-254; Cooley, "Syria Opens Windows," p. 5; John K. Cooley, "Syria Chides U.S. Leadership," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 19, 1971, p. 10. Those who seek perfect consistency as the key to explanation of government motives will be frustrated in this case. The Syrian blockage (closure of borders) had deleterious effects on several economies. Maintaining the blockade at some cost to Jordan must appear a matter of principle. Yet, immediately before the July 1971 clashes, Syria seized and confiscated a large shipment of arms destined for the Palestinian guerrillas apparently at least partially because allowing completion of the trans-action through Syria would have imperiled relations with the Amman regime. Moreover, Syrian efforts to improve these relations were not interrupted by the border closure. "Arab Borders: Brotherly Blockades," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 36 (4 September 1972), Economic Brief; "Syria-Jordan: A Much Needed Detente," *ibid.*, III, no. 50 (11 December 1972), pp. 2-3; Kerr, "Hafiz Asad," p. 705; UPI, July 6, 1971; *Al Moujahid* (Algiers), August 7, 1971; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 253-254.

¹⁵⁸ John K. Cooley, "Syrian Move Brings Praise--and Apprehension," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 4, 1972, p. 4; Jim Hoagland, "Syrian Leaders Call on Hussein to Join Battle Against Israel," *The Washington Post*, December 6, 1972, p. A-19; "Syrian-Jordanian Border Reopened to Facilitate Battle," FBIS, no. 233 (1 December 1972), p. F1; *Al-Baath*, December 3, 1973. However transparent this rationale with regard to the (un)likelihood of Jordan's actively joining any near-term military effort against Israel, it is certainly true that the economic consequences of the closed borders were undermining the Arab anti-Israeli boycott and were forcing the Jordanian government itself to deal increasingly (and more and more publicly) with Israel. "Arab Borders: Brotherly Blockades."

this dispute, and Syria's role has not been more important than several others'.¹⁵⁹ Today, Syrians still feel they are more central to developments in the Middle East than is Jordan. Moreover, they feel that they are more a key to the future and that Jordan needs Syria more than Syria needs Jordan. Thus, the currently cooperative relations between the two governments can be expected to continue. As in the present and recent past, relations with Jordan will have to be conducted with a low silhouette unless Jordan becomes a Palestinian state or until a Palestinian state is established.

Iraq presents a very different problem. Rather than being the object of Syrian intervention, Iraq has had substantial influence on and attraction to a large constituency within Syria. The two Baath regimes have shown little interest in a reconciliation. Each bestows more criticism than praise on the other. Yet, except for minor squabbles such as Syria's closure of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC)'s pipeline through Syria, Damascus and Baghdad have few inherent major conflicts. Moreover, their consistent verbal animosity gains greater attention than their cooperation. Iraq has provided economic assistance to Syria, and each provides firm diplomatic support for the other against its major military threat, Israel in Syria's case, Iran in Iraq's. The change in Iraq's government, from al-Bakr to a Saddam Hussein regime, a slow revolution that has been described in Chapter 3 above, has been attended by a shift to moderation and pragmatism consonant with Assad's approach. Iraq made a major military contribution on the Golan front in 1973, and following the war Iraq has sent very substantial economic aid to Syria in recognition of the devastation the war brought Syria. Moreover, Iraq, playing the 1967 Syrian role, disapproved of the cease-fire in late October 1973, and withdrew its forces from the Syrian front. Iraq and Syria have not agreed on disengagement, either.¹⁶⁰ Yet in the absence of the Kurdish conflict,

¹⁵⁹ Hussein endeavored (before the 1974 Rabat Conference) to bolster his position on a bilateral basis with leaders such as Sadat. The king is far too knowledgeable about Arab politics to have tried to secure Syrian public support. Yet, the Assad government is probably quite content with the nature of the Jordanian leadership, barring major eruptions between the King and the Palestinians.

¹⁶⁰ See *An-Nahar*, February 22, 1974; "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 22 (3 June 1974), p. 1.

those forces would surely return in the event of renewed hostilities. Iraq's rejection front represents a policy option that increases Assad's leverage on Egypt. It is an option to which Syria would rather not turn at this time, however. Should the prospects of a war become even greater, Assad will probably expect Iraq's help once again.¹⁶¹ Thus, one can expect Syrian support of Iraq vis-a-vis Iran and the Kurds in the spring of 1975, and a concerted effort to end domestic Iraqi strife at least temporarily so that Baghdad's forces will be available on the Golan.

We have already reviewed the importance of the Palestinian issue area in Syrian politics. The signal role accorded the Palestine question has required the many Syrian governments to adopt strong positions over the years. Before 1967, Syria had supported a group called the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF). Following the June 1967 War, however, the PLF, Youth for Revenge, and Heroes of the Return¹⁶² merged to form the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), under the leadership of George Habbash.¹⁶³ Just before the war, the Syrian Baath had established the (Baathist) Vanguard of the Popular War of Liberation Organization. The military element of the Vanguard was known as Sa'iqa. Originally formed from Palestinian elements in, and linked to, the Syrian army, Sa'iqa was later joined to the Baath party apparatus.

From 1967 to 1970, Sa'iqa was perhaps the most active of the guerrilla organizations and therefore rapidly attracted a large number of adherents. Sa'iqa played a major role in Syrian politics, but it also attracted support from other Palestinian organizations as a major alternative to Fatah. Sa'iqa even attempted a coup in Jordan and was a major irritant in

¹⁶¹The rationale for Iraq's withdrawal of its forces from Syria was the exigencies of the Kurdish and Iranian problem. Syria accused Iraq of "engineering separate developments to abdicate [its] pan-Arab responsibilities." *Al Baath*, February 24, 1974.

¹⁶²Heroes of the Return was the name of the commando group based on Habbash's Arab National Movement (ANM).

¹⁶³John K. Cooley, *Green March, Black September: The Story of the Palestinian Arabs*, (London: Frank Cass, 1973), p. 139. For a discussion of the evolution of the Palestinian organizations, their activities, organizations, and ideologies, see El-Rayyes and Nahas, *Guerrillas for Palestine*; William B. Quandt, Fuad Jabber, and Ann Mosely Lesch, *The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); and William E. Hazen and Paul A. Jureidini, *The Palestinian Movement in Politics* (Lexington: D. C. Heath and Co., forthcoming).

Lebanon where the organization enjoyed a large following and played a key role in bringing about the Lebanese-Palestinian clashes in April and October 1969.¹⁶⁴

Syria has not limited its involvement to Sa'iqa. In addition to the PLF and Sa'iqa, Syria has supported the Popular Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PRFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), and Fatah. Other groups have also been permitted to operate on Syrian territory, but Habbash has had a frequently conflictual relationship with authorities in Damascus.¹⁶⁵

Under Jadid, policy toward the guerrillas was influenced by the desire to have Palestinian support in inter-Arab disputes. And Jadid in turn backed the Palestinians. Sa'iqa worked to overthrow Hussein. In Lebanon, the Baath was strong among Lebanese and among Palestinian refugees in the Bekaa and South Lebanon. Sa'iqa therefore has been a powerful force in this area. Yet, Syria supported the Palestinians not only with Sa'iqa: PLA units were dispatched from Syria in October 1969 to reinforce the guerrillas in combat against the Lebanese.¹⁶⁶ A similar but more ambiguous set of events took place in September 1970 in Jordan.

Assad's coup led to a change in Syrian policy toward the resistance. First, over a period of six months, Sa'iqa was purged of Jadid elements. Assad was attempting to repair relations with regimes alienated from his predecessor, and a major concern was Jordan. For this reason, a large shipment of tanks, troop carriers, light weapons, and ammunition--sent by China (via Algeria) to Fatah--was intercepted and confiscated by the Syrians.¹⁶⁷ This action complicated relations with Algeria, but because wide scale Jordanian-Palestinian fighting erupted in Jordan soon after the seizure, the Assad regime received considerable criticism from the Palestinians. Assad closed the borders with Jordan, but sent the Syrian chief of staff, General Tlas, to mediate.

¹⁶⁴ El-Rayyes and Nahas, *Guerrillas for Palestine*, pp. 49-52.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 47.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51; "The Resistance Movement in Crisis (3)," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 21 (31 July 1972), Background.

¹⁶⁷ "Arms from Peking," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, II, no. 27 (5 July 1971), pp. 1-2; "Mediator Needed," *ibid.*, II, no. 28 (12 July 1972), pp. 2-3; Petran, *Syria*, 253-254.

Soon after July 1971, Syria began to restrict the Palestinians. The number and severity of the restrictions varied, but, generally, the guerrillas' political activities (in Syria) were proscribed and operations against Israel had to be approved by the army command. Syria exercises strict supervision over the PLA, and over the "Yarmouk Brigade" (formed primarily by Jordanian defectors from the 1970 civil war).

The new regime, then, has been very circumspect about supporting the Palestinians against other Arab regimes. In the July 1971 fighting, for example, Jordan tried to pressure the Palestinians to accept the settlement proposals advanced in Jidda. Closing of Syria's Jordanian border was a minimum act of solidarity, largely for appearances. (See above.) However, in 1973, Syria clearly supported the guerrillas against Lebanon. After the initial ceasefire collapsed, Syria not only closed its borders with Lebanon, PLA and Yarmouk Brigade units crossed the frontier.¹⁶⁸ It is likely that Lebanon simply paid a double price for objectives unrelated to Syria's smaller neighbor. In late 1972 and early 1973, Syria had begun to exercise even greater control over the Palestinians in the country. Restrictions almost unprecedented came into play.¹⁶⁹ In this perspective, Assad needed a stage on which to dramatize his continued support for the Palestinian cause. The second reason is Assad's determination "to convince the peace-makers in Cairo that any agreement with Israel which does not take the Golan into account will be bound to fail...."¹⁷⁰

As the planning for the October 1973 War reached its final state, Syrian relations with the Palestinian movement neared a nadir. The Assad government seemed to take issue with the quasi-governmental status of the

¹⁶⁸ El-Rayyes and Nahas, *Guerrillas for Palestine*, p. 145.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145. The restrictions became even tighter in mid-1973 ("Syria and the Palestinians," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 23 [4 June 1973], Backgrounder), but these later restrictions are probably directly related to the October War, which by then was already in the planning stage. In January and February, stories concerning alleged Syrian "incitement" of villagers against the commandos circulated. These rumors probably grew out of the increased restrictions, but one cannot discard the idea of a government-inspired or -started *canard*. See "Hussein's Peace Efforts," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 6 (5 February 1973), p. 3; "The Commandos: Plan for Action," *ibid.*, IV, no. 7 (12 February 1973), p. 4.

¹⁷⁰ "Syria: A Front Reopened," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 38 (18 September 1972), p. 1.

PLO and objected to the PLO claim to be the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. New restrictions were placed on the commandos, and Syria refused to allow the transfer of some PLA units to Iraq.¹⁷¹ Clearly, these initiatives were part of the war preparations. Some related to political ends and were designed to help shore up the eastern front against Israel. Others were related to Syrian military preparedness.

Since October, Syria has tried to reinforce the most moderate Palestinian leadership, whose views are largely in accord with Assad's. Although Sa'iqa has waged a long struggle to wrest the leadership of the Palestinian movement from Fatah, in recent years Sa'iqa's main role has been to represent Syrian views. Fatah's Yassir Arafat was not immediately liked by Assad, and similar reports have come from other Arab leaders. Yet, Syria's decisionmakers have concluded that Assad represents the best hope for a resolution to the Palestinian issue. As a moderate leader of the largest Palestinian group, Arafat is influential. Syrian leaders apparently also concluded that most of the Palestinians could and would fall in behind Arafat when the proper situation arose. In July 1972, Syria first agreed to allow Arafat to control all of the guerrilla groups in south Lebanon.¹⁷² Since then, Sa'iqa has usually supported Fatah. When it has not, the differences have been minor or have symbolized tactical shifts in Damascus, *not* a decision to oppose Arafat's growing role.

Syria's current policy on the Palestinian issue is that Syria will accept what the Palestinians agree to. Likewise, they will oppose what the Palestinians oppose. A Syrian foreign ministry official said that

Syria...cannot sign any agreement unless the Palestinians agree to it. If they do not agree..., Syria could not acknowledge any "organization" or "group"...called "Israel." Syria...was a third party and could no more legitimize Israel than could a third party legitimize one individual's usurpation of another's house. Without Palestinian acquiescence the recognition of Israel by Syria or any other Arab state would be legally invalid and politically without value.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹"Syria and the Palestinians"; "Cairo Summit: Splits and Alignments," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 38 (17 September 1973), pp. 1-2.

¹⁷²"Lebanon-Commandos: New Formula Sought," *ibid.*, III, no. 27 (3 July 1972), pp. 3-4.

¹⁷³U.S. Congress, *Between War and Peace*, p. 29.

Thus, supporting Arafat and Fatah is Assad's view of the best way to increase the likelihood of a settlement Syria could approve. In this connection, Syria has cooperated with Fatah in suppressing, harassing, and eliminating individual Palestinians in Syria who oppose Arafat's conciliatory policy.¹⁷⁴

Lebanese-Syrian relations are something of an anomaly. Although there is a strong transnational kindred feeling between the peoples of the two countries, and traditions and customs carry over from one people without any clear distinction based upon arbitrary political demarcations, the recent histories of Syria and Lebanon have been so divergent that a number of disputes has arisen. The relatively open political forum in Lebanon has been a particular source of problems at times, as have the vagaries of Palestinian-Lebanese relations. Syrian political refugees have joined the numerous middle class emigres in Lebanon, and their feelings about the Damascus regimes have often not been muffled. Despite some isolated individual problems of this sort, Assad has generally followed a policy of improving relations with Lebanon. The principal difficulty, as with his Jordanian rapprochement, has been the Palestinians. In cases of Palestinian-Lebanese conflict, Assad has at least publicly supported the Palestinians. Moreover, the closure of the Jordanian-Syrian border, also undertaken for the Palestinian movement, exacted a heavy economic toll from Lebanon.

Lebanon has long been viewed as the most Western-oriented country in the Middle East, and, therefore, has perhaps been given disproportionate attention outside the region. Syrians perceive their role as growing in importance and that of Lebanon declining. There is a widespread feeling in Syria that Lebanon may disintegrate over the next few years even as Syria consolidates. President Assad cannot be unaware of these popular views.

The last regional object of Syrian attention is the Arabian peninsula. As in the other environments we have considered, Assad's approach to the oil-producing countries of the Gulf has differed markedly from the policies pursued by his predecessor, Salah Jadid. In May 1970, ARAMCO's

¹⁷⁴See the interview of Assad by Arnaud de Borchgrave, *An-Nahar*, June 3, 1974.

pipeline through Syria was ruptured. Although the break was accidental, the Jadid regime demanded higher transit fees as a prerequisite to the repairs. The pipeline lay severed for months. Soon after Assad assumed power, however, the pipeline was repaired (and the fees were increased). Assad terminated the restrictions on trade with Saudi Arabia as well as the prohibition against Saudi overflights. The "Voice of the Arabian Peninsula," a revolutionary broadcast over Damascus Radio, also ceased. Similarly, good relations have been established with the Union of Arab Emirates. Assad has sought to improve Syria's relationship with these regimes for two reasons. First, a principal objective of his regime has been the reversal of the isolation in which Syria found itself at the time of his accession to power. Consequently, given the inability of their economies to productively absorb the vast funds accruing to them, these countries represent important potential (and now actual) contributors to the Syrian economy that has badly needed capital investment and hard currencies and to the Syrian military.¹⁷⁵ Since the war, Assad recognizes, too, that King Feisal is not only a Syrian financial benefactor but is as well in a unique position to bring American pressure to bear on Israel and thus to assist Syria in the realization of its political goals. For this reason, Syria will continue to pursue close cooperation with Saudi Arabia, even though policy differences may arise on matters of tactics.¹⁷⁶

Syria's most important non-regional ties are with the Soviet Union. In a process beginning in the late 1940s, Syrian governments move increasingly close to the Soviet Union. The Jadid government pursued a policy of particularly close cooperation with Moscow, and, indeed, Assad, as we have noted, criticized his predecessor for some of his regime's actions in this connection. However, Assad in power has left his role as critic behind, and has generally continued Syria's good relations with the Russians. When they were forced to leave Egypt, they increased their pressure in Syria.

¹⁷⁵Coolley, "Syrian Opens Windows," p. 5; "Syria-Jordan: A Much Needed Detente," pp. 2-3; Holmstrom, "Syria," p. 13; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 253-254.

¹⁷⁶The important point here is that Assad may attack Egypt over such tactical differences, but will simply agree not to agree with the Saudis. (Their differences do not, of course, extend to the cession of any of the Golan territory to Israel.)

The Syrian rejection of Security Council Resolution 242 was a major point of disagreement between Moscow and Damascus, but while various Soviet media attacked Syria's position, there is no evidence to suggest the Syrian view seriously disturbed the Soviets. Eventually, Assad indicated more flexibility on the question of peaceful settlement, eliminating the most serious point of contention between the two countries.¹⁷⁷ The Cairo-Moscow rift in the summer of 1972 discomfited Syria. Faced with the prospect of his two most important allies (in the effort to recover Golan) taking separate routes, Assad took an active role in trying to reconcile the two.¹⁷⁸ At the time, Syria's relations with Moscow were excellent: a Soviet squadron had visited Latakia in the winter, and a new shipping line was instituted between Latakia and Ilyichevsk.¹⁷⁹ Soviet economic assistance was very considerable (the bulk of foreign aid to Syria) and even if foreign trade was not oriented significantly toward Moscow, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were the backbone of the development program.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, Soviet aid in the petroleum industry was beginning to make a substantial pay-off.

In the fall of 1972, then, Syria, still trying to repair Egyptian-Soviet relations, was endeavoring at once to get additional military assistance from the Soviet Union and yet to maintain a safe distance from

¹⁷⁷"The Soviet Union and the Arab World (3)"; Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances*, p. 117.

¹⁷⁸John K. Cooley, "Russian Test in Syria," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 13, 1973.

¹⁷⁹"The Soviet Union and the Arab World (3)."

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.* The Soviet Union and East Europe have provided ten times as much economic aid to Syria as either international organizations or the United States. Cf., United States, Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in 1973* (10 October 1974), INR RS-20, Table 1 and United States, Agency for International Development, *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants and Assistance from International Organizations: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945-June 30, 1973* (May 1974), pp. 27, 181. It should be pointed out that trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, when combined, does represent a very sizeable portion of Syrian foreign commerce: fully 45.4 percent of Syrian exports went to the Soviet Union (35.2 percent) and Eastern Europe (10.2 percent) in 1972, and 25.3 percent of imports come from those areas (18.9 percent and 6.5 percent, respectively). *Communist States*, Tables 11, 12. See Barthel, *Industrialization*, p. 99.

Iraq toward which it was being pushed by Moscow.¹⁸¹ The somewhat uneasy situation between Syrian military personnel and Soviet advisors never reached the crisis stage that in Egypt precipitated the Advisors' expulsion.¹⁸² Syria's loyalty was rewarded: the Soviet Union and Syria reached an agreement by the terms of which Syria would receive an advanced, integrated air defense system similar to Egypt's; Russia would have the right to use several airfields for strategic purposes related to the Sixth Fleet; and the Soviet Union would receive extensive privileges in Latakia and Tartus.¹⁸³

Since late 1972, President Assad has maintained with few problems¹⁸⁴ his cooperation with the Soviet Union. The post-October War environment saw a new policy toward the United States, but unlike his counterpart in Egypt, Assad took care to maintain the usually close Syrian-Soviet cooperation. Indeed, in his own interest, Assad has seen fit to give Moscow as high a profile as possible in disengagement and the peace talks. In spite of the fact that Syrians have occasionally objected to what they saw as undue Soviet restraint in providing arms and applying pressure on the Middle East issue,¹⁸⁵ Assad recognizes that the Syrian military forces depend on Soviet materiel and training, and that there is no near-term prospect of replacing that Soviet function. Moreover, certain domestic constituencies preclude such a turn from Moscow. Finally, Soviet support can provide greater bargaining latitude vis-a-vis domestic critics (as well as Israel) essential to a settlement. Thus, however Assad may try to

¹⁸¹"Syria and Russia: Pink Balloon," p. 37.

¹⁸²"Syria: New Policy Lines"; "Bakr in Moscow: A Reply to Sadat," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 38 (18 September 1972), pp. 2-3.

¹⁸³"Syria: New Policy Lines"; "Syrian-Libyan Relations: In the Doldrums?"

¹⁸⁴Soviet Jewish emigration has become a problem, because a substantial proportion of Soviet Jews who emigrated to Israel settled in the occupied Golan Heights. "Syria: Military Moves," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 20 (14 May 1973), p. 1.

¹⁸⁵Pressure has frequently been used to moderate Syrian demands or policies, but recently the U.S.S.R. has been more concerned to protect distinctly Soviet interests.

improve Syria's relations with the West, he will not use them to replace Soviet ties, at least not until the Israel problem is resolved.

Syria, needing Soviet support, will continue to press for the preferred Soviet approach to a Middle East peace, the Geneva conference. Apart from the advantages to Syria we have already identified, Syria can thus be assured of Soviet support. In return, Syria will continue to be a Soviet mouthpiece, insisting on the importance of Soviet participation, and will provide Moscow the high visibility at the Conference and in any separate agreements (as in the disengagement talks).¹⁸⁶ Similarly, it can be anticipated that when the Soviets take a more cautious policy toward peace--either by opposing the personal diplomacy of Kissinger, by demanding an overall approach to settlement, or because they fear American inroads--Syria will not go beyond the most conservative Soviet position. (Indeed, sometimes Assad will intentionally remain far to the rear of Soviet policy on settlement in order to secure political, economic, or military concessions.)

Syrian policies toward the United States are more ambiguous. While President Assad is known to wish better relations with the West than Syria has had in recent years--or in 15 to 20 years--he also recognizes the costs and benefits. In this context the costs of a clear-cut and ambitious all-out rapprochement with the United States before a Middle East settlement is reached would be severe--loss of Soviet backing at a crucial time in Arab-Israeli relations, at a time when Syrian leaders believe Syria must and can deal from a position of strength. Recognizing they cannot expect untrammelled support from Washington in return, there is no persuasive reason to go too far toward rapprochement. No one can fill the Soviet role in military supply, and Washington would not, even if its production capacity allowed such a policy.

Yet, as we have already noted, there are benefits in a slight rapprochement. Besides increasing potential pressure on Israel, improving Syrian-American relations increases the potential resources that may be

¹⁸⁶"Joint Syrian-Soviet Communique Backs Syrian Right to Liberate Occupied Land as USSR Air is Promised in Military and Economic Fields," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5779 (17 April 1974), pp. 2-3; "Is It a War of Attrition on the Golan?"; "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions"; *al-Ahram*, July 6, 1974; "Syria: A Waiting Game."

expanded for national development. Over time, and after a settlement, better ties with Washington will assist in reducing Syrian dependence on the Soviet Union. A major advantage of improving relations with the United States was the moderate and responsive image thereby given to Syria in Saudi eyes. Finally, a substantial body of opinion in Syria, as elsewhere in the Arab world, looks with favor on Americans and, to some degree, the United States. American technology is particularly highly respected.

Assad, recognizing the benefits of a better relationship with the United States, has made an effort in this direction virtually from the moment of his assumption of power. He facilitated tourist entry, invited U.S. sports teams, and made other cautious overtures.¹⁸⁷ Although political negotiations in the aftermath of the October 1973 War sped up the rapprochement, Assad has made it clear he does not presently plan to go as far or as fast as Sadat in this connection.¹⁸⁸ Yet, the official position of the Syrian government, like that of Egypt, is that the United States attitude has now changed.¹⁸⁹

Relations with the West as a whole are less controversial. This is even more the case since most European governments have come to support--at least verbally--return of the occupied territories and recognition and acceptance of Palestinian rights. Syrian relations with the West are relatively good, but tend to fall in the realm of economic and military interactions, not political.

¹⁸⁷ Lewis, "Syria Makes Cautious Overtures," pp. H1, H7.

¹⁸⁸ "Disengagement Accord: Syrian Precautions," *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 9, 1974, p. 3. At the same time, it should be recognized that Syria has less bargaining power than Israel and occupies a more desperate position. Thus, Syria must be more tentative for the present, as Assad's opposition to the ending of the oil embargo exemplifies. See "Arabs Lift Oil Embargo on U.S. with Libya and Syria Dissenting," *Middle East Economic Survey*, XVII, no. 22 (22 March 1974); "Syria: A Waiting Game."

¹⁸⁹ *Al-Thawrah*, June 5, 1974; James F. Clarity, "Syria Says She Shifted U.S. Attitude," *The New York Times*, June 6, 1974, p. 3. Another domestic argument used to justify relations with the U.S. was the need for flexibility in foreign affairs, a position that contrasts sharply with Jadid's. See *al-Baath* and *al-Thawrah*, June 11-15, 1974; "Al-Baath Defines Syria's Foreign Policy," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 4218 (12 June 1974), p. 5; "Flexibility of the Syrian Foreign Policy," *ibid.*, XXI, no. 5219 (13 June 1974), pp. 11-12.

Military Programs

Until Assad took over, the objective of Baath policy in the military was the creation of an "indoctrinated army." In fact, the goal was never achieved except at the higher ranks which were subject to political purges and control.¹⁹⁰ Assad has been less concerned with party loyalty than with regime loyalty. With fewer and less consequential challenges than Jadid had to contend with, and with much greater popular support, Assad has also been able to work toward the improvement of the army's military capabilities.

Since the June 1967 debacle, Syria has placed primary emphasis on upgrading its defense, particularly its air defense. The extent to which this stress has devolved from Russian doctrine or to which it has grown from Syrian military calculus is not clear. The results of the Syrian development of defensive capability were evident in October 1973, when the Syrian army held the Israeli ground forces in a stubborn defensive battle less than 20 miles from Damascus and Syrian SAMs exacted a high toll of Israeli aircraft.

Like Egypt, Syria has suffered from the dearth of trained manpower. The impact of this shortage has been particularly acute in the air force, where modern aircraft and air combat demand increasing sophistication on the part of command, combat, and maintenance personnel. Indeed, although Arab air forces possess a combined numerical superiority over Israel, the Israeli air force at least until the October War had a distinct advantage over Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in the most important air combat areas--initial ordnance delivery capability, range, turnaround time, and number of qualified pilots.¹⁹¹

In an attempt to redress the military imbalance after 1967, Jadid and Assad sought to acquire materiel and training from the USSR. The Soviets, on the other hand, used their sole supplier status for leverage against Syria's policy of rejecting negotiation. By 1969 the Syrian leadership was dissatisfied with the Soviet response and tried to use the Sino-Soviet rivalry to bring about more responsiveness on the part of Moscow. Even the signing of a major arms agreement in July 1969 did not

¹⁹⁰ Petran, *Syria*, p. 234.

¹⁹¹ Dale R. Tahtinen, *The Arab-Israeli Military Balance Today* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1973), pp. 4-10.

materially change the troubled Syrian-Soviet relationship, which improved only after the Assad coup in 1970.¹⁹²

The departure of the Soviet forces and advisors from Egypt in July 1972 led to a rapid improvement of Syria's military position. In May, the two countries had concluded military assistance agreements envisaging Soviet assistance to the Syrian army and air force in exchange for a Soviet naval and air presence in Syria. In addition, Syria sought advanced Soviet aircraft, electronic countermeasures (ECM), and surface-to-air missiles.¹⁹³ In the aftermath of the July 1972 Soviet expulsion from Egypt, Moscow wasted little time in demonstrating its willingness to shift emphasis from Egypt to Syria by staging a very unsubtle but prestige-building airlift of materiel to Syria.¹⁹⁴ As a result of further military assistance agreements with the Soviet Union concluded in autumn 1972, some Syrian objectives were realized. Syria received more MIG-21s and an integrated air defense system based on radar-controlled anti-aircraft fire (AAA) and several types of surface-to-air (SAM) missiles. The Soviet Union would help develop--and use--Latakia and Tartous.¹⁹⁵ In December 1972, the Assad government suspended fighting on the Israeli-Syrian border so that the SAMs (SAM-3 and SAM-6) could be installed by Soviet personnel.¹⁹⁶ However, it is quite possible that the relatively high

¹⁹²Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *The Arms Trade with the Third World* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971), pp. 545-549; Jacob C. Hurewitz, "Changing Military Perspectives in the Middle East," *Political Dynamics in the Middle East*, Paul Y. Hammond and Sidney S. Alexander, p. 90. See above, political programs.

¹⁹³"Grechko's Tour: Longer Term Hopes," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 21 (22 May 1972), p. 2. Some of the additional items Syria wanted may have been available in return for the conclusion of a treaty like those signed with Egypt and Iraq. It is rumored that Assad refused such an offer.

¹⁹⁴David Hirst, "Soviet Arms Airlift to Syria Seen as Bid to Recoup Loss," *The Washington Post*, September 25, 1972, p. A-16; Marilyn Berger, "Moscow Sends Syria Latest Tanks, MIG-21s," *ibid.*, September 28, 1972, p. A-28; Jim Hoagland, "150 More Soviet Advisors Reported in Syria, Airlift Ends," *ibid.*, October 6, 1972, p. A-25; "Syrian Arms--More Political than Military," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 3, 1972; "Syria and Russia: Pink Balloon," *The Economist*, October 7, 1972, p. 37.

¹⁹⁵William Beecher, "Syria Said to Agree to Soviet Build-up at 2 of Her Ports," *The New York Times*, September 14, 1972, pp. 1, 18; "Syrian-Libyan Relations: In the Doldrums?"

¹⁹⁶"Syrian Front: Tense But Calm"; "Syrian Budget: Decreased Defense," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 6 (5 February 1973), p. 2.

level of fighting on the border in 1972 and 1973 was part of a policy to (1) increase the training and experience of Syrian personnel¹⁹⁷ and (2) accustom Israel to a high activity level. Syrians did not fire the newly emplaced SAMs at Israeli reconnaissance aircraft, but only because Soviet operators balked at the idea. Later, Communist SAM technicians from East Asia were secured to operate the SAMs.¹⁹⁸

The most important military decision Syria has taken in many years was the determination to go to war in October 1973. Although the reasons for this decision were political--the apparent impossibility of securing any movement toward the return of the Golan Heights--it is unclear precisely how much Assad really believed Syrian forces could accomplish. Syrian forces carried out a well-coordinated attack on the Golan at the outset of the war, but command and control and other aspects of coordination (except withdrawal) seem to have improved insufficiently. The SAM air defense system, and the Syrian defense line east of Sassa, consisting of concrete emplacements linked by trenches (and mine- and wire-screened), held relatively well, although Israeli aircraft had control of the skies in several sectors by the war's end.¹⁹⁹

For months after the ceasefire, Assad maintained a policy of keeping the Mt. Hermon front active. Although this was not a serious military action (Syrian artillery fired sporadically and without any apparent effort to inflict damage), the policy at least partially met the demands of the pro-war constituency in Syria and as well continued some economic pressure on Israel. Throughout the period of Assad-Kissinger negotiations on disengagement, the fighting continued.²⁰⁰ The Syrian leadership understands and uses the interaction of political and military action:

Political action...as we understand it, is an inevitable necessity. It should aim at achieving a solution, but not just any solution. It must be an honorable and

¹⁹⁷ John K. Cooley, "Syria Seeks Arab Prestige with New Blows at Israel," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 10, 1973, pp. 1, 5.

¹⁹⁸ John K. Cooley, "Syria Complains to U.N. of Israeli Air Invasion," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 15, 1973, p. 2.

¹⁹⁹ See International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), *Strategic Survey* 1973, pp. 16-20. Cf., the other major studies of the war, cited above.

²⁰⁰ Henry Kamm, "Syrian Guns Seen in Political Role," *The New York Times*, March 21, 1974, p. 11; "Syria's Crucial Position in Mideast Situation," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 2159, February 5, 1974, pp. 11-12; "Syria: Ball Starts Rolling."

dignified solution, a solution that straightens out matters, a solution that achieves justice and nothing else. We understand political action this way, and on this basis we shall continue political action. It is also as such and for the sake of this aim that we understand military action. For the sake of this aim we will continue military action.²⁰¹

Soviet policy before the October War was to provide equipment at best one generation behind Israel's. Since 1973, however, Syria has received several MIG-23s, some of the performance characteristics of which exceed those of the F4. Syrian forces have a much higher proportion of modern equipment today than in October. They also have SCUD surface-to-surface missiles (reportedly controlled by the USSR). MIG-23 pilots may be from the Soviet Union, North Korea, or Cuba, for the most part, but Syrian pilots are being trained. There are approximately 3,000 Soviet advisors in Syria, and some of these advisors were reported to have taken an active role in the October fighting.

The Syrian armed forces have grown in size as well as equipment since October 1973. Air defenses have been built up even more, and the experience gained in ECM and ECCM in the war will have been useful in training. The defensive strategy will continue unchanged, although greater Arab use of ECM and ECCM can be anticipated. Similarly, aware that little progress has been made in reducing the relative effectiveness differential between Syrian and Israeli pilots in air combat, surface-to-surface missiles are more attractive both for deterrence and for offensive operations. In addition, some air-to-surface stand-off weapons will be sought by Syria to begin to bridge the Arab-Israeli gap in stand-off systems that exists in surface-to-surface and air-to-surface weapons.²⁰²

Nevertheless, Syrian forces probably have only a marginal offensive capability against Israel. Certainly, they cannot undertake a lone--or even the major--offensive role. Because of the effectiveness of their

²⁰¹ Hafez Assad, FBIS, no. 68 (April 8, 1974), p. F2. "...In this field, namely the field of political struggle, daily political action is intermingled with daily military action." *Ibid.*, no. 48 (11 March 1974), p. F3.

²⁰² IISS, *The Military Balance 1974-1975*, pp. 37-38; Dale R. Tahtinen, *The Arab-Israeli Military Balance Since October 1973* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1973); Seymour Topping, "Egypt and Syria Divided on U.S. Peace Proposals," *The New York Times*, December 18, 197, pp. 1, 17; Bordwicz, "Syria Opening Doors," p. A6.

defenses, however, and the consequent toll they could exact of limited Israeli resources, Syrian forces are a crucial component of the Arab military threat.

To what extent will Syria be willing to resort to force again for the return of Golan? Without question, if Egypt decided to have recourse to the *ultima ratio regum*, Syria would join in the effort. It is virtually inconceivable that Syria would take on Israel alone or, in effect, without Egypt. And one reason the Syrians fear Egyptian negotiations with Israel is the possibility Egypt may get enough to insulate itself against other Arab opinion (and thus immunize itself against Syrian pressure). Assad will not go to war with Israel over the Palestinian issue. Recovery of the Golan is a higher priority, however. In the event no further movement is made on the Golan, war is far from impossible as long as Egyptian cooperation can be achieved.

We shall not address Soviet policy in this paper. It is, however, clear that Syria cannot go to war without a high level of Soviet support in (1) the creation of an arms inventory, (2) the development of a manpower training base, and (3) the availability of spares, ammunition, and replacements. As in October, a war may be launched without complete foreknowledge of the limits to be placed on Soviet support. Clearly, sole supplier status confers immense potential leverage over Syrian policy on the Soviet Union. Why, then, does Assad not attempt to diversify Syrian military supply? Will he? Already, Syria has attempted to purchase some British arms only to be rebuffed.²⁰³ Yet, at least until a settlement is achieved, Syria must accept Moscow's role as its sole supplier. No other country has military hardware in sufficient quantities immediately available and with the airlift and sealift capability (and lack of domestic pressure) to resupply Syria even during hostilities with Israel. Few countries possess aircraft and armor of the level of sophistication now available to Syria from the Russians. Few of the potential Syrian suppliers can provide an equivalent amount of training or advisors. And any substantial purchases from the West entail the danger of reducing Soviet support. In addition, the Soviets are required to continue the training they provide for what is already an impressive arsenal in Syria. Thus, until a settlement frees Syria from near-term military requirements, the luxury of diversification of supply is beyond Syrian reach.

²⁰³Bordwicz, "Syria Opening Doors."

Economic Programs

Economic development plans have had to compete with the Arab-Israeli conflict for Syrian resources. The economic burden of Syrian military expenditures--the incremental output that could be obtained by diverting a given proportion of resources from military to economic investment--has been among the highest in the Middle East.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the Syrian economy has begun to show signs of rapid development since the Assad regime has come to power.

Syrian economic objectives have been to

- continue infrastructural development
- increase and regularize agricultural production
- integrate resources and activities successfully in the national plan
- optimally exploit mineral deposits and petroleum
- bring about a greater accumulation of reserves
- develop Syria's role as a regional economic center
- secure more capital investment

The Syrian economy had stagnated in the years before World War II. Growth continued at a slow pace into the immediate post-war years. However, the economy grew rapidly from about 1948 until 1957. After 1957, successive crop failures followed by a rigidly ideological Baath doctrinaire approach to economic management held the economy back once again until the Assad regime came to power in 1971.²⁰⁵ Although development planning in Syria also began in 1948, the programming had little to do with growth, for such planning was limited to sectoral efforts for a small number of related projects until the late 1950s. The first attempt at comprehensive development programming was undertaken in 1960 by the then-newly formed Ministry of Planning in its Syrian Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ See Fred M. Gottheil, "An Economic Assessment of the Military Burden in the Middle East," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, XVIII, no. 2 (Sept. 1974), pp. 502-513.

²⁰⁵ Samir A. Makdisi, "Syria: Rate of Economic Growth and Fixed Capital Formation, 1936-1968," *Middle East Journal*, XXV, no. 2 (Spring 1971), p. 164.

²⁰⁶ "Syria: Development Policy," *Middle East and African Economist*, XXIII, no. 6 (June 1969), p. 86.

The Syrian economy since independence has been greatly affected by political instability. Considered by many to be the prime Middle East candidate for a balanced economy, successive Syrian governments seemed only to compound the difficulties of their predecessors. The Baath, in the years after 1963, accelerated the flight of middle class skills and upper and middle class capital through a headlong dash toward nationalization and land redistribution.

Syria's economy is primarily agricultural, like that of other developing countries. Unlike many other developing nations, however, Syria is blessed with rich agricultural land and a large, traditional reservoir of entrepreneurial and artisan talent. The stability brought about by the tenure of the Assad regime gave rise before the October war to conditions sufficiently favorable to create the widespread feeling Syria was on the verge of an economic take-off.²⁰⁷

Despite the fact that Syria suffered more war damage than any other country, "the 1973 war may prove to have been a [positive] watershed for the Syrian economy."²⁰⁸ Massive funds have been transferred to Syria by other Arab countries to alleviate the damage caused by the war and in recognition of Syria's "front-line" position in face of the common Arab enemy. Because Syria is primarily an agricultural country whose industry is light and relatively dispersed, the devastation wrought by war did not destroy the economy. While losses have been estimated at \$7 billion, post-war reconstruction began immediately and at a rapid pace virtually as soon as the war ended (and in spite of the Mt. Hermon battles).²⁰⁹

The current economic plan projects an annual 8.2% increase in net national product from 1970 to 1975, an annual increase in consumption of no more than 8%, and a growth in national savings of 14.8% per year. Industry was projected to grow at 15.8% annually and agriculture, 5.1%.

²⁰⁷ See above. Cf. Youssef Azmeh, "Economic Survey," in "Syria," Europa Publications, *The Middle East North Africa: A Survey and Reference Book* (London: Europa, 1974). Hereinafter, Europa, 1974-75.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 660.

²⁰⁹ Alain Cass, "Arab Economic Recovery Alters Balance of Power," *Washington Post*, November 24, 1974, p. H1; "Survey 1973: Syria," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 15 (15 April 1974), Economics and Oil Section, pp. 3-4; Europa, 1974-75, pp. 659-660; "After Guns, Industry," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 2 (13 January 1975), Economics and Oil, p. 2. The seven billion loss figure includes estimated loss of production and estimated lost growth. Thus, it is speculative.

A fourth five-year plan is currently being prepared. Although the goals of the present five-year plan were drafted under the previous regime, implementation and interpretation have come from Assad's economic bureaucracy, and popular credit for the improvement of the economy has gone to Assad as well.²¹⁰

That Syria has made critical economic progress over the last five years should not be taken as an indication that the major problems confronting the economy have been overcome. In the planning area, Assad's pragmatism is still subject to pressures from the party and from other ideological groups for a greater emphasis on "socialist reforms." A major hurdle, then, is achieving a compromise between socialist dogma and Syria's more entrepreneurial traditions and needs.²¹¹ Other problems apart from the diversion of resources to fill military needs and the damage wrought by the 1973 war are the perennial shortage of hard currencies; balance of payments deficits; inflation caused by economic progress and deficit financing; agricultural instability; lack of understanding of the relationship between science, technology, industrialization, and development, an antiquated and inadequate revenue system, particularly in agriculture; reluctance of the private sector to invest; corruption; insufficient coordination in plan implementation and between various government organizations; and the low literacy level, and the resultant dearth of specialists and technicians.²¹²

A major need of most developing states is capital investment. In this, Syria is no exception. However, Syria saw much of its private investment

²¹⁰ Holmstrom, "Syria," p. 12.

²¹¹ Bordwiec, "Syria Opening Doors," p. A6.

²¹² Petran, *Syria*, pp. 206, 208, 211-212, 243-244; Cass, "Arab Economic Recovery"; E. Kanovsky, "The Economic Aftermath of the Six Day War: UAR, Jordan and Syria, Part II," *Middle East Journal*, XXII, no. 3 (Summer 1968), pp. 283-285; Bent Hansen, "Economic Development of Syria," chapter 7, *Economic Development and Population Growth in the Middle East*, ed. Charles A. Cooper and Sidney S. Alexander (New York: American Elsevier Publishing Company, 1972), p. 363; A. B. Zahlan, "National Science Policies (For Arab Middle Eastern Countries)," unpublished paper, 1972 (mimeographed), pp. 1, 25-29; "Survey 1973: Syria," p. 3; "Syria: Industrial Policies," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, II, no. 17 (26 April 1971), Economic Brief; "Syria: Mysterious Budget," *ibid.*, III, no. 9 (28 February 1972), Economic Brief; "Reorganizing Trade," *ibid.*, III, no. 21 (22 May 1972), Economic Brief; "Syria: Obstacles to Growth," *ibid.*, IV, no. 3 (15 January 1973), Economic Brief.

capital leave the country as a result of the social transformation sought by diverse governments in Damascus and accelerated after the 1966 neo-Baath coup. Tax revenues were used--unsuccessfully--to fill the role of private sector venture capital and to balance the budget. Trade barriers of various sorts--tariffs and controls--were employed to correct the perennial (and worsening) payments deficit situation and to reduce consumption (and increase saving). After the June 1967 war, the Jadid regime pursued the same policies--only more vigorously.²¹³ Recognizing that private and public sector investment were virtually equal as late as 1966-68, the impact of the rapid decline in private investment has been significant.²¹⁴ Assad has attempted to restore investor confidence, to create an atmosphere conducive to capital investment by Syrians, Syrian emigres, and foreigners.²¹⁵

Some of the initiatives the Assad regime has instituted in order to increase private investment and foreign investment include:

- immunity from prosecution for those who smuggled out money before 1971
- abolition of previous rent law (which precluded eviction)
- establishment of duty-free zones in Aleppo, Damascus, Latakia, and Tartous
- authorization to import industrial and agricultural raw materials, industrial, agricultural, and transport machinery, equipment and spare parts
- encouragement to private Syrian investors to enter into joint ventures with state agencies in light industries and assembly plants
- reserving of several areas (such as hotels) to private investment only
- removal of restrictions on the movement of capital across national boundaries
- release of assets of Arab nationals frozen for a number of years
- treatment of all Arab nationals as Syrians in regard to property
- ratification of the Cairo agreement on the investment of Arab capital
- permission to import luxury goods
- permission to the private sector to secure loans from foreign investors

²¹³ Bowen-Jones, "Agriculture," p. 423; "Syria: Steppe Land Dreams."

²¹⁴ Europa, 1974-75, pp. 661, 666; Britannica Yearbook 1965, p. 790.

²¹⁵ "Syria: Main Economic Trends," *New York Times*, January 27, 1974.
cf. sources in previous note for lack of progress.

A major effort has been undertaken to attract Syrian emigre capital back. Although substantial private skepticism of government intentions remained, emigre capital began to return in 1971 and has continued to flow back during the post-October war period.²¹⁶ Official recognition of the crucial importance of private investment is visible in the growing number of statements stressing the subject and the contrast between these statements and the previous neo-Baath exclusive concern with public investment. Under Assad, the Syrian government has attested to its belief "in the need for making maximum use of the private sector and for providing it with ideal conditions so it can play its part within the framework of general economic policy."²¹⁷

Similar encouragement is given to foreign investment, public and private. We have noted some of the measures put forth to secure foreign investment. Since the October war, there has been noticeable progress in this area. French companies are investing in the construction of oil storage tanks. Sheraton is building a hotel in Damascus, as is a Belgian firm. Syrian Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Haydar has said;

We are prepared for an open-minded discussion with any foreign capital aiming to participate in Syria's development.... We do not distinguish at all between capitalist capital and socialist capital.²¹⁸

He also indicated that Syria "looks forward to closer and firmer economic relations with the countries of Western Europe and with the United States...."²¹⁹ Thus, despite continued controversy over the role of the private sector and foreign investment (as well as over foreign investors), the Assad regime's policies have clearly turned toward welcoming any and all private and foreign investment.

²¹⁶*Middle East Economic Survey*, XVII, no. 11 (January 4, 1974), p. 8.

Former Prime Minister Khleifawi, quoted in "Syria: Positive Results," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 40 (2 October 1972), Economic Brief.

²¹⁷ See the interview in *An-Nahar*, June 20, 1974. Cf. "Haydar: Close Economic Links with West Desired," FBIS, no. 121 (June 21, 1974), p. H3; "Heidar: We Look Forward to Closer Economic Relations with Western Europe and America," *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5225 (June 21, 1974), p. 7.

²¹⁸*An-Nahar*, June 20, 1974.

²¹⁹ There are those in the Baath party, as well as the Syrian Communist Party and other groups, who take a different view. Cf. above, and "CP General Secretary Bakdash Interviewed," FBIS, no. 124 (June 26, 1974), p. H8, treating an interview entitled, "When Guns Became Silent on the Golan Heights," *Trybuna Ludu* (Polish), June 19, 1974, p. 7.

Other foreign funds constituting capital imports to the Syrian economy included a major element of Syrian income, oil transit payments. Previous governments have played politics with the oil transit payments revenues. For example, the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) pipeline through Syria was closed in 1966-1967 for political purposes, and the Trans-Arabian Pipeline (TAPLINE) was not repaired (until the Assad regime took power) after being damaged in 1970. However, oil fees have constituted such an important component of the Syrian budget that in emergencies even the Jadid regime facilitated oil transit.²²⁰ Indeed, Syria cooperated with Israel to repair the TAPLINE through Golan carrying petroleum for Western Europe.²²¹ Under Assad, the government has made every effort to ensure the continuity of pipeline service through Syria, creating behavioral assurances to Iraq and Saudi Arabia almost as firm as the Shah's assurances to the West on non-participation in an embargo.

Other development funds have come in the form of economic assistance. As we have pointed out, most Syrian aid has come from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. We have discussed elsewhere²²² the comparative terms of economic assistance offered by various countries. The following table presents comparative data on selected economic assistance to Syria.

Table 4-1 Selected Economic Assistance to Syria²²³

	(\$ million U.S.)					
	1946-1952	1953-1965	1966-1971	1972	1973	Total
UNITED STATES	0.4	85.8	3.7	0.3	0.2	90.5
U.S.S.R.	0	100	133	84	0	317
EASTERN EUROPE	0	85	109	93	15	302
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	0.1	22.7	12.3	17.2	17	69.2

Sources: Communist States and Developing Countries; U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants

²²⁰ Kanovsky, "Economic Aftermath," p. 281.

²²¹ Kanovsky, "Economic Aftermath," p. 282.

²²² McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East*, chap. 5.

²²³ This table does not purport to be a complete accounting of economic assistance to Syria. It does not, for example, include economic assistance from the People's Republic of China, from Western developed countries other than the United States, or from Arab countries.

As Table 4-1 shows Soviet and East European aid has been the dominant external financial force in Syrian development. The symbol of this assistance is the Euphrates Dam, the first stage of which was completed in 1973. However, due to the new regional wealth resulting from oil revenues, the majority of external assistance to Syria is now Arab aid. The present regime has cultivated good relations with virtually the entire Arab world except Iraq, and the rewards came in the regional support during and after the October 1973 war,²²⁴ when substantial sums were pledged for war damages by Algeria (\$20 million), Iraq (\$50 million), Kuwait (\$100 million), Libya (\$20 million), Saudi Arabia (\$100 million), and the Union of Arab Emirates (UAE-\$100 million) in rapid succession.²²⁵ In sum, Syria received about \$1 billion, and by mid-1974 aid to Egypt and Syria reached \$3.5 billion.

Apart from grants, development loans at concessionary rates are important and useful in the Syrian financial picture. A number of such loans have been concluded since the October 1973 war. The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), for example, lent \$6.76 million for the reconstruction and further development of the Homs oil refinery. The Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development (ADFAED) extended two loans totaling \$12.25 million for an electricity plant at Banias and two satellite communications stations. The World Bank agreed to lend \$100 million for the construction of two power plants, and the Bank and the International Development Association approved lending \$73 million for an irrigation project. Japan has extended a \$100 million loan to help finance the construction of three new oil refineries.²²⁶ Syria has attracted greatly increased interest as a result of the Arab oil wealth and the resources the oil states are willing to put at Syrian disposal. Certainly, then, Syrian policy will continue to look to good relations with the Arab oil producers and to attracting foreign capital for development.

The new policy toward foreign capital and new attractiveness to international lenders suggests Syria will be less dependent on Soviet and

²²⁴ Assad had made a concerted effort to secure subsidies from Bahrain, Kuwait, Libya, and Qatar before the war. "Syria: Envoys with a Mission," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 4 (22 January 1973), p. 1.

²²⁵ *Middle East Economic Survey*, January-March 1974 issues.

²²⁶ *Middle East Economic Survey*, vol. XVII, no. 11 (4 January 1974), pp. 8-9; *ibid.*, XVII, no. 15 (1 February 1974), p. 12; *ibid.*, XVII, no. 20 (8 March 1974), p. 8; "Syria Abolishes Trade Bans," p. A17; "Syria: Relaxation Measures."

East European aid. Ironically, the reduction of dependence may coincide with (and influence) greater Soviet willingness to extend aid to Syria. The post-1973 Syria is certainly a better investment for Soviet capital, and Syria occupies a key position--particularly in terms of Soviet objectives--in the political dynamics of the Middle East. The Euphrates Dam at Tabqa may also symbolize Soviet aid to the Middle East. The initial accord between Moscow and Damascus concerning the dam was signed by the new neo-Baath government of Salah Jadid in the spring of 1966 and envisioned a Soviet loan of \$133 million, slightly over half the total costs of the first stage. We shall discuss the dam below. In terms of Soviet aid, assistance on this project represents a very considerable proportion of total Soviet assistance. Further economic cooperation agreements were signed in 1972 for (1) petroleum industry development, (2) rail system and water resources development, and (3) work on hydroelectricity and irrigation. The most recent series of economic agreements (in 1974) concerned the financing of the enlargement of Latakia port; railway construction between Aleppo and Homs, Tartous and Homs, and Palmyra and Homs; land reclamation near the Euphrates Dam, construction of high tension power stations in the same area; and additional work on the dam itself.²²⁷

A potential source of foreign capital is in tourism, long neglected by Syria. We have pointed to the new hotels being financed by private foreign capital. The Syrian government has begun a costly program of tourist investments with a view to attracting one million tourists each year from Europe and North America.²²⁸

A final source of direct foreign currency is trade. Although many of the Syrian emigrants have been merchants who have moved their operations to Beirut, Syrian trade has been expanding rapidly. Much of the expansion has been in trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but the proportion of Syrian trade with Western Europe has been expanding at the expense of the previous pattern since Assad gained control in 1970. For example, the Soviet Union has been replaced as the primary importer of Syrian cotton

²²⁷ Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances*, pp. 120-123; "Syria: Obstacles to Growth"; *Arab World*, XXI, no. 5183 (April 23, 1974), p. 9.

²²⁸ "Au-delà des combats," *Jewie Afrique*, no. 691 (Avril 1974), p. 42.

by Italy. Italy is also the primary exporter to Syria. 229

As in all international trade, the terms, conditions, and amount of foreign commerce are affected by developments in the international monetary system. Syrian policy on international monetary relations favors stable but adjustable par values and the establishment of a "substitution facility" that combines current account imbalance convertibility with the consolidation of dollar overhang. The Assad regime has supported the linking of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) allocations in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with a lending program to developing countries to increase their access to additional resources and to facilitate the financing of payments deficits. 230

Within Syria, considerable emphasis has been placed upon infrastructural development (social overhead capital). The largest infrastructural project is the construction of the Euphrates Dam. The dam when completed will result in

- multiplication of the electric power available to Syria by at least four times
- irrigation of 1.7 million additional acres of land (double the previous figure)
- resettlement of 500,000 farmers in 15 new villages
- training for thousands of Syrian technical personnel
- incentives for nomads to settle
- modification of the current drought-flood pattern in Syrian agriculture. 231

²²⁹Europa, 1974-1975, pp. 663-664; de Onis, "Syria Is Limiting Role," p. 8. A five-year foreign trade plan for 1971-1975 was promulgated as a result of planners who began working in 1969. The plan set out to reduce the export of local raw materials, increase Arab capital inflow, encourage tourism, and discourage emigration. However, economic liberalization measures adopted in 1973 and 1974 have largely mooted the plan. Europa, 1974-1975, p. 664; "Reorganizing Trade," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 21 (22 May 1972), Economic Brief.

²³⁰"Statement by the Governor of the Fund for the Syrian Arab Republic," *International Monetary Fund: Summary Proceedings of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors, September 1973*, (Washington, D.C., 1973), pp. 294-298.

²³¹Balta, "La Syrie Baasiste"; Cooley, "Syria Opens Windows"; John K. Cooley, "Tabqa Dam to Transform Syrian Desert Back Into Garden," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 8, 1971, p. 6; John K. Cooley, "Syria, Soviets Sign to Finish Euphrates Dam Project," *ibid.*, December 18, 1972, p. 3; "Syria: Steppe Land Dreams," *The Economist*, December 30, 1972, pp. 24, 26; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 213-215; Europa, 1974-75, pp. 664-665; Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances*, pp. 120-123; *An Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 29 (16 July 1973), Economic Brief.

There is no question that the Euphrates dam may have an immense impact on Syria. The agricultural output in the past has been wholly dependent upon the vagaries of climate. As a result, given the central position of agriculture in the overall Syrian economy, that economy varied widely, rendering planning difficult and life unpredictable. "Most observers [agreed] that the...national income must be measured in terms of three- to four-year periods...rather than on a year-to-year basis." ²³²

Additional resources have been drawn upon for other infrastructural projects. Notable among these have been the development of a road network linking all major towns; a rural electrification program (like Egypt's) being undertaken with Soviet aid; a railroad network tying all sections of the country together; port development; and the completion of the most modern airport in the Middle East.

The road and railroad development have not been without controversy. Both roads and railroads have been constructed in the absence of demand and necessity, according to critics. The government in Damascus, however, has considered transportation and communication links to be central to the development of Syrian identity. The road network has improved and expanded, linking all major towns and all borders. Railways have grown by one and a half times over the last decade and are still in the midst of an ambitious development program that will have resulted in the laying of more track in slightly over a decade than had been accomplished in the previous half-century. Latakia port has been enlarged and developed with a view to handling cargo to and from Aleppo and northeast Syria, as well as Iran, Iraq, and Kuwait. Because of its silting problems, however, Latakia is to give way to Tartous as Syria's major port and one of the largest in the eastern Mediterranean. Extremely modern, Tartous is equipped with specialized machinery to handle the raw materials Syria exports and is the terminus of the Djezira oil pipeline. Aircraft and passengers arriving and departing from Damascus have increased by one and a half times from 1970 to 1972. ²³³

²³² "Syria: Positive Results," *An Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 40 (2 October 1972), Economic Brief.

²³³ "Syria: Steppe Land Dreams"; Cooley, "Syria, Soviets," p. 3; Balta, "La Syrie Baasiste"; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 212-214; Europa, 1974-75, pp. 675-676; *Britannica Book of the Year 1974* (hereinafter *Britannica Yearbook 1974*), ed. Daphne Daune and J.E. Davis (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1974), p. 645; *Britannica Book of the Year 1973* (*Britannica Yearbook 1973*), con t.

The objective of this large-scale infrastructural development is not only to create the necessary environment prerequisite to domestic Syrian economic development. The goal is to become--or share Lebanon's role as--the major regional economic and communications center.²³⁴

As we have indicated, Syrian agriculture is still the mainstay of the economy. In 1973, Prime Minister Ayyubi announced agricultural objectives that indicated the government sought to:

- reconsider land reform legislation to increase production
- increase educational and technical assistance in agriculture
- increase afforestation
- foster the planting of orchards
- establish and support cow and poultry farms and fisheries
- achieve a major increase in meat, milk, and egg production through better methods of animal husbandry
- expand the agricultural support industries (agricultural machine manufacture, fertilizer and insecticide production, veterinary medicine and vaccine manufacture)
- clarify pricing, marketing, and financing policies
- increase irrigated area and reclaimed land
- combat the increasing soil salinity in the Euphrates basin.²³⁵

There have been three critical developments in Syrian agriculture--agarian reform, encouragement of cotton cultivation, and the national investment in agriculture, particularly in irrigation (including the Euphrates Dam).²³⁶ These developments are intimately related. Syrian agriculture has traditionally been merchant-owned and share-cropper worked. Important land reform legislation was promulgated in 1958 after Syria united with Egypt. Suspended

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editor-in-chief Michel Silva (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1973), p. 646. Motor vehicle use and railway use have increased by two and one-and-a-half times, respectively, over the past decade. Other forms of communication have increased as well: telephones (two times), radio receivers (well over three times), television (120 times), and ship-borne cargo (30 times). Cf. *Britannica Book of the Year 1965* (Britannica Yearbook 1965), ed. Philip W. Goetz (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1965), p. 790.

²³⁴See Economy Minister Mohammed al-Imadi's remarks in an interview with *al-Anwar*, February 21, 1974; "Syria Takes Steps"; *Europa*, 1974-75, p. 660; Balta, "La Syrie Baasiste."

²³⁵"Syrian Government Policy Statement," pp. 5-6.

²³⁶H. Bowen-Jones, "Agriculture," *The Middle East: A Handbook*, ed. Adams, p. 423.

in 1961, reform was reintroduced in 1962. The new Baath regime in 1963 altered agrarian reform significantly to favor the landless. The land reform has been largely completed now, but with mixed success. The new security of the landowner has had the effect of reducing his mobility. Because the value of the small parcels of land redistributed is more limited (on an annual potential output basis) than minimum industrial wages, reform has not reduced urban migration but has reduced individual agricultural income potential to some degree. Moreover, the reform policy has incorporated labor-intensive production techniques and aimed at increasing yield-per-land-unit rather than yield-per-labor-unit. Small units restrict capital investment. Theoretically, the reform envisaged state-supervised cooperatives for credit, marketing, and technical guidance. In fact, there have been inadequate state financing, no technical assistance, and few marketing facilities. Where such assistance has been provided, educational level of the farmers has been so low, and independence and resistance to cooperation so high, that little progress has been achieved.²³⁷ Land reform is related to the demographic situation in Syria, where large areas are underpopulated and others experience population pressure. But it is also related to the extremely uneven pattern of water distribution. Thus, Syria has a mixture of intensive and extensive farming. Near Tabqa, site of the Euphrates Dam, there is a shortage of farmers. The agricultural problem connected with resettlement is that farmers who might be brought from Latakia are not used to irrigated farming techniques. For a variety of reasons--many political--over half Syria's cultivable lands have been normally unused.²³⁸

Notwithstanding problems, Syria is considered by many the breadbasket of the Middle East. Since the emphasis on cotton in the mid-1950s, Syrian agricultural production has greatly increased. Cotton is now the major crop, having quadrupled in production over the last decade.²³⁹

Since Assad took power, the regime has been stressing the need to increase animal production with a view to elevating it to half agricultural

²³⁷Petran, Syria, pp. 206-207; Kamal, "Feudalism and Land Reform," *The Middle East: A Handbook*, ed. Adams, pp. 497-499; Bowen-Jones, "Agriculture," p. 423; Elias H. Tuma, "Agrarian Reform and Urbanization in the Middle East", *Middle East Journal*, XXIV, no. 2 (Spring 1970) United States Department of Agriculture, *The Africa and West Asia Agricultural Situation*, May 1967, p. 16; Kanovsky, "Economic Aftermath," p. 280.

²³⁸Bowen-Jones, "Agriculture," p. 423; "Syria: Steppe Land Dreams."

²³⁹Europa, 1974-75, pp. 661, 666; Britannica Yearbook 1965, p. 790.

income. Little progress has been made in this area, however.²⁴⁰ Syrian industry has been gaining in economic importance. The major change in this regard is the development of the oil industry. After years of failure in exploration, commercially exploitable discoveries were made in 1955 (Karachuk), and 1956 (Suwaydiya). A third field has been discovered at Rumelan. Neither Karachuk nor Rumelan has been exploited. All Syrian oil is of very low quality which has hindered marketing and limited hard-currency earnings. Political instability and technical limitations have also delayed the oil sector's contribution to Syrian development. Nevertheless, crude oil output increased from 0 in 1967 to eight million tons in 1973 and may reach 15 million tons by 1975. Exports amounted to \$54 million in 1972, 18 percent of total exports. A larger total derives from oil transit receipts, \$86 million in 1973 (and almost \$150 million in 1974). Moreover, the current pipeline from Iraq is being expanded by 25%, and the two countries are considering the construction of a second pipeline as well.²⁴¹

Syria is also planning to exploit its oil for other purposes. Some consideration is being given to petrochemical industries. Syrian oil is used in the phosphate and fertilizer industries already established. The other major Syrian industry based upon oil is the petroleum refining industry. This activity has been based in Homs. Israeli bombardment during October 1973 war destroyed the refinery, but by January 1974 it was back in operation at the rate of 32,000 barrels per day. The refinery returned to approximately full capacity (54,000 barrels per day) within another month.²⁴²

Most of the rest of Syrian industry is light and scattered. We have adverted to fertilizer and phosphate industries. In addition, Syria has developed industries such as rubber, paper, sugar refining, a glass factory, farm vehicle assembly plants, an electrical appliance factory, tanneries, an iron-bar factory, and an asbestos cement factory. Fully one third of Syrian industry (excepting the petroleum industry) is related to food processing and tobacco, and almost another third is centered on clothing and textiles.

²⁴⁰ "Syria: Main Economic Trends," *New York Times*, January 27, 1974. Cf. sources in previous note for lack of progress.

²⁴¹ Europa, 1974-74, pp. 662-663; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 211-212; "Syria: Obstacles to Growth"; *Middle East Economic Survey*, XVII, no. 21 (March 15, 1974).

²⁴² *Middle East Economic Survey*, XVII, no. 11 (January 4, 1974), p. 8.

Social Programs

Education

As in other developing societies, the educational level of Syria's population is a limiting factor in socio-economic development. This is not to indicate the absence of either education or educational progress. The following table gives some idea of the increase in educational facilities and attainment over the past decade.

Table 4-2 Syrian Educational Progress

	1961-1962	1971-1972
Number of elementary school pupils	518,756	981,069
Number of elementary school teachers	14,827	27,280
Number of secondary school students	94,959	343,752
Number of secondary school teachers	5,467	14,962
Number of university students	18,739	46,025
Number of university teachers	177	1,120
Vocational trainees	10,746	12,283
Vocational teachers	880	1,536

Sources: Europa, 1974-75, p. 670; Britannica Yearbook 1974, p. 645; Britannica Yearbook 1965, p. 790.

Clearly, progress has been registered in the fight against ignorance. Syria's aim is universal literacy. Yet, the focus on literacy rate is often misleading. First, Syria is becoming urbanized. A corollary of that phenomenon will be the growth of the literacy rate. But the rate may continue to be high among rural groups. For example the peasant literacy rate is around 80%. Thus, the literacy rate is not an accurate guide to certain societal sub-groups of substantial importance to the national development effort. Second, ignorance pervades Syrian society, and ignorance is not synonymous with illiteracy. In other words, overcoming illiteracy will not inherently alter the social problem of ignorance. Indeed, ironically, knowledge does not always require literacy. ²⁴³

Similarly, increases in the number of schools and in the proportion of school-age children attending school are not sufficient to upgrade the level of knowledge or to prepare the Syrian populace for the exigencies of social change. The present educational system fails to provide students with a problem-solving conceptual framework. The teaching quality is low and there is an overall shortage of teachers. Nothing has been done after schooling to ensure that pupils leaving elementary school do not fall back into illiteracy. Classes are crowded, and school facilities are frequently

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Petran, *Syria*, p. 208; Abbas Kelidar, "Syrian Arab Republic," *The Middle East: A Handbook*, ed. Michael Adams, pp. 305-306; Zahlan, "National Science Policies," p. 1.

old. Arabic science textbooks currently used are poor. Much secondary and higher education has been theoretical and elitist. In recent years, the Baath has emphasized the technical, mathematical, and scientific curricula. Over half of the Syrian students enrolled in educational institutions overseas are studying the natural sciences, engineering, and medicine.²⁴⁴ Nevertheless, one critic has suggested that

The fundamental problem, as far as the Arab World is concerned, is not so much the lack of an adequate instructional system as the lack of local institutions that could locate, select, absorb, disseminate, analyze, and adapt science and technology.²⁴⁵

Moreover, he points out, massive foreign education and the establishment of numerous "no-research colleges and universities" do not conduce to the development of a science and technology capability. ²⁴⁶

Foreign education has resulted in a "brain drain" of substantial proportions. Approximately ten percent of students sent abroad have failed to return. The brain drain problem in Syria has been aggravated by the emigration of a large segment of the middle and upper classes. As a result, the government was reluctant to offer incentives for graduates and skilled manpower to return because of (1) the "bourgeois origin" of many of those in question, and (2) the fear of competition.²⁴⁷

The Assad government has developed a series of educational policies to address these problems. The policies include

- upgrading of the university construction program and reorganization of higher education
- repatriating technological know-how of the Syrian emigrant
- maintaining the momentum in school construction
- identification and use of the most appropriate and effective text material.²⁴⁸

Foreign education continues to be an important element in the overall training picture. In 1973, Syria sent 1,665 students and trainees to the Soviet Union.²⁴⁹ About 13,000 Syrian students studied abroad in institutions

²⁴⁴Zahlan, "National Science Policies", pp. 1,6; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 290-1.

²⁴⁵Zahlan, "National Science Policies," p. 15.

²⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 14; Petran, *Syria*, p. 223.

²⁴⁸Syrian Government Policy Statement, p. 15.

²⁴⁹*Communist States 1973*, Table 7.

of higher learning in 1969, the largest number in Arab countries (50 percent).²⁵⁰ Another opportunity for training through foreign channels is in assistance projects offering training for local nationals in Syria. The West has rarely placed much emphasis upon training in its aid projects, and such training has been an important reason Soviet assistance is accepted. Almost as soon as the Euphrates project was under way, the dam administration began research on farming in Euphrates soil and undertook the training of Syrian technicians and scientists.²⁵¹

Health

Health in Syria is also fairly typical of developing countries. There is a high incidence of intestinal and other diseases resulting from poor nutritional practices. Physicians, dentists, and health facilities are in short supply and are poorly distributed. Little progress has been made in this regard, the number of doctors and hospital beds per capita having increased over the twenty-five years from 1945-1970 by 12 percent and 6 percent, respectively. ²⁵²

The Assad regime's objectives with respect to health suggest the government will (1) increase the application and coverage of health insurance, (2) increase the number of clinics servicing poor and rural areas, (3) improve standards in hospitals, (4) increase the number of hospitals, (5) encourage private sector health care, and (6) emphasize increased medical training and research. ²⁵³

Housing

The urbanization of Syria is creating severe housing problems. Shantytowns have grown up around the major cities, especially Damascus and Aleppo. The proportion of Syrian population living in an urban environment increased between 1960 and 1970 from 38.8 percent to 43.5 percent. The Assad regime seeks to increase the private sector role in housing. ²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰R.D. McLaurin, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy* (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1975), p. 130.

²⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 39; Cooley, "Tabqa Dam," p. 6.

²⁵²Petran, *Syria*, pp. 218-219.

²⁵³Syrian Government Policy Statement, pp. 11-12.

²⁵⁴Syria Central Statistical Office, "L'Evolution économique et sociale en Syrie pendant la décennie 1960-1970"; Syrian Government Policy statement p. 12.

Religion

Assad continues to steer a careful course in religious matters. Ever vulnerable to Sunni attacks, the regime has reduced the strident secularism of Baath tradition, preferring to simply avoid religious debate. To minimize criticism Assad stresses the Muslim nature of Alawi beliefs. He emphasizes his own "Islamism." Moreover, he had his own pilgrimage to Mecca televised. During the presidential election, a book was published by the government stressing that Alawis are Muslims. When disturbances have broken out over religious disputes, the Assad regime has manifested considerable restraint in restoring order. Sunnis are being placed in positions of high visibility even when Alawis retain power. In general, then, Assad has followed a policy of accommodation in religion, choosing to avoid confrontation and polarization.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ "Syria: Sunnis' Urge to Rule"; Petran, *Syria*, pp. 237-238; "Syria-Libyan Relations: In the Doldrums?" Ma'oz, "Attempts," p. 404.

CHAPTER FIVE

UNITED STATES INTERESTS AND POLICIES

Of all Middle East actors, regional and external, the interests and attitudes of the United States have probably been most greatly altered by the events and developments of the early 1970s. Until then, U.S. national interests in the Middle East could be viewed as marginal. These interests were

- 1) denial of control over Middle East resources to hostile powers
- 2) preservation of the assured destruction capability of the regional element of U.S. strategic forces
- 3) assured supply of Middle East natural resources important to American industry and military
- 4) assured supply to U.S. allies of resources adequate to maintain their economic and military strength
- 5) realization of the benefits resulting from U.S. commercial investments and operations in the Middle East
- 6) maintenance of U.S. credibility by meeting fully American commitments¹
- 7) maintenance of overflight and transit rights.

Although we shall not detail the elements in American decision-making on the Middle East or the constituents of Middle East policy--these are reasonably well-known--it is necessary to have some idea of U.S. policies to the present. These have been described in a number of books and articles to which we refer the reader.²

¹See U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *National Commitments*, Report 91-129, 91st Congress, 1st session, 1969 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), pp. 50, 65-67.

²John C. Campbell and Helen Caruso, *The West and the Middle East* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1972); Harry N. Howard, "The United States and the Middle East," chapter 5, *The Middle East in World Politics: A Study in Contemporary International Relations*, by Tareq Y. Ismael (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974); Robert Hunter, "The United States in the Middle East," *The Middle East: A Political and Economic Survey*, ed. by Peter Mansfield (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 90-100; Amos A. Jordan, "Les Etats-Unis à la recherche d'une politique méditerranéenne," *Politique Etrangère*, XXXVI, no. 5-6 (1971), pp. 501-518; Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, *Kissinger* (Boston, Little Brown, 1974); Don Peretz, "The United States, the Arabs, and Israel: Peace Efforts of Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon,"

That the attitudes and interests of the United States have changed substantially over the last five years--and particularly since 1973--is the major point, the suggestion with which we opened this chapter. These changes are a function of several phenomena.

First, the Soviet Union and the United States, the two superpowers whose cold war from the end of World War II to the present has been the primary threat to peace and to life as we know it, became the sole great powers deeply involved in the Middle East even as they embarked on a broad and ambitious attempt to improve their relations. Their heightened regional rivalry stood in glaring--and ominous--contrast to their growing global cooperation. Some critics argued that the U.S.S.R. must cooperate in the Middle East or "Detente" was meaningless.³ We believe, on the contrary, that there is no inherent contradiction between growing global cooperation and continued regional rivalry. Yet, clearly, the new cooperation and the more nearly equal political strength in the area should have altered superpower goals and policies.

Second, the October (1973) war has resulted in a pronounced shift in international attitudes toward the Middle East. Virtually all of the developed countries and the developing world alike support return of the occupied territories and recognition of Palestinian national rights.

This international shift derives in turn from the solidarity and power of Arab oil exporting nations, in the case of the developed countries, and from the financial strength of the oil producers, in the Third World's perceptions. (Particularly in the latter case, the merits of the issues as seen by local eyes have also played a major role.)

Moreover, Egypt and Syria, though not major oil producers, have directly benefitted from the revolution in petroleum commerce. The cost of their high level of armaments is borne by the oil producers but must be matched

² *con't*
Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,
CDI (May 1972), pp. 116-125; William R. Polk, *The United States and the Arab World*, revised edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969); Robert J. Pranger, *American Policy for Peace in the Middle East: Problems of Principle, Maneuver and Time* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1971); William B. Quandt, "The Middle East Conflict in U.S. Strategy, 1970-1971," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, I, no. 1 (Autumn 1971), pp. 39-52 and "United States Policy in the Middle East: Constraints and Choices," *Political Dynamics in the Middle East*, ed. by Paul Y. Hammond and Sidney S. Alexander (New York: American Elsevier, 1971), Garry Rubin "US Policy, January-October 1973," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, III, no. 2 (Winter 1974), pp. 98-111.

³ Kalb and Kalb, *Kissinger*, p. 466.

by Israel either through Israeli expenditures or American grant military aid. Finally, the oil picture for the U.S. has changed. In 1972-1973 the continuing growth in energy demand and the decline in domestic American petroleum production left a shortfall of significant proportions. Moreover, whereas Venezuelan and Canadian crude had been imported to meet this shortfall in the past, the dimensions of the requirement meant only Middle Eastern oil could fill the demand. In 1973, for example the oil import pattern changed dramatically. Table 5-1 demonstrates the growth and shift in U.S. petroleum importation during 1973.

Table 5-1
U.S. Crude Oil Imports in 1973⁴
(Thousands of barrels per day)

Suppliers	January-June 1973 (% of total import)	August 1973 (% of total import)
Algeria	143.9	162.5
Enypt	16.3	36.8
Iraq	5.7	11.1
Kuwait	48.1	86.7
Libya	164.8	197.6
Oman	12.2	14.5
Qatar	3.1	5.3
Saudi Arabia	322.8	638.5
Syria	3.4	--
Tunisia	21.6	32.0
Union of Arab Emirates	87.2	100.1
Iran	160.3	230.5
Canada	1,176.1	908.6
Venezuela	503.1	704.4
Other (Indonesia, Nigeria, etc.)	732.7	1,135.8
Total Arab oil imports	819.1	1,285.1
Total non-Arab imports	2,572.2	2,979.3
Total crude oil imports	3,391.3 (100%)	4,264.4 (100%)

The significance of this change was visible after the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973 when crude oil exports to the United States were embargoed by the members of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). This action caused considerable disruption in the United States, although the net effect had greater psychological than real importance except in a dozen or so industries. However, the embargo was followed by a large price rise that became effective on January 1, 1974. The magnitude of petroleum price increases has affected all industrialized countries.

⁴Source: R.D. McLaurin and Mohammed Muhsisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), p. 318.

From the foregoing, it must be clear that a predominant U.S. interest in the Middle East today is oil. Moreover, the interest is no longer commercial in nature. Middle East oil will continue to supply a crucial portion of America's energy requirements until alternative energy sources are developed.

The United States has no major interests in Egypt or Iraq or Syria. None of the emotional or traditional associations that characterize European-American relations or even American-Israeli relations tie most Americans to any of the three Arab states. Yet, the U.S. interest in oil for U.S. industrial and defense needs (not to mention the U.S. commercial interest in downstream operations) does confer on the Middle East as a whole a very considerable importance, and Egypt, Iraq, and Syria are key states in the evolution of the Middle East political situation. Since the United States seeks as a principal regional objective to ensure the continued supply of adequate oil from the Middle East, the U.S. must endeavor to bring about a political situation in which oil production and distribution will not be interrupted, either by (a) facilitating a settlement of the conflict that threatens the oil supply--the Arab-Israeli dispute--or (b) reducing the role of any of these three states (or any other states) opposing any resolution acceptable to the other parties.

One of the major changes that the 1973 war brought about in American perceptions was in the preference schedule of leadership views. Before 1973, the United States was scarcely discomfited by what Heykal called the no-war, no-peace situation.⁵ The increase in oil imports from the Middle East was disturbing to a few Americans,⁶ but there was no threat to superpower detente, to good relations with Israel or to improving ties with a number of Arab regimes. The early fear that Israeli retention of Arab territories would rekindle a regional conflagration receded over time. The Soviet presence or "threat," as it was sometimes called, had been reduced through the surprising expulsion of Soviet personnel by Sadat in 1972, an act that seemed to prove to many U.S. policy was on the right track

⁵See chapter 2 above.

⁶E.g., James E. Akins, "The Oil Crisis: This Time the Wolf is Here," *Foreign Affairs*, LI, no. 3 (April 1973), pp. 462-490.

or, at the least, was not as counterproductive as its most vehement critics averred.⁷

The outbreak of war in October 1973 seemed to demolish many of these views, however. The limited objectives (and, probably, expectations) of Egypt and Syria demonstrated anew that return of the occupied territories was a *sine qua non* of peace. The growth of Palestinian terrorism over the three years preceding the war⁸ suggested that resolution of the Palestinian problem was as central to peace as it had been a quarter century earlier. Soviet supply of needed end items, spares, and ammunition, followed by threat of direct Soviet participation after the first U.N.-prescribed cease-fire was violated, threw into question and endangered the Soviet-American detente for which both countries had worked so assiduously. Centrifugal forces were pulling with unprecedented force on America's few persistent friends--Lebanon and Tunisia--while countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the other Gulf states were harshly critical of U.S. policy. An oil embargo was instituted, and Faisal's role in this action seemed anything but reluctant. Most surprising of all--probably to everyone--Israel failed to make quick work of the Arabs. The qualitative edge conferred by the best equipment, most highly trained manpower, and best command and control system in the area was no longer adequate to ensure the fast, decisive victories Israel needed. If war is to be drawn-out, continual (but intermittent), and unpredictable, Israeli victories can only be Pyrrhic and will not be the path to peace Israel needs.

Thus a new, post-October War preference schedule placed a much higher premium on achieving a peaceful settlement in the Middle East that addressed the Palestinian dilemma, the occupied territories, overall Arab-Israeli relations, and possibly Jerusalem. The new perception recognized the cost to American interests of the continuing no-war, no-peace, and no-solution situation in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, the Middle East itself was closer to peace in many ways. The decisiveness of the Israeli victory in June 1967

⁷ Cf. Steven L. Spiegel, "The Dominant and the Subordinate System: The Patrons v. the Pygmies in the Middle East," paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 7, 1972.

⁸ See William E. Hazen and Paul A. Jureidini, *The Palestinian Movement in Politics* (Lexington: D.C. Heath & Company, 1975), chapter 4.

ended forever Arab dreams of disestablishing Israel. The Israeli conquest of the West Bank of the Jordan opened the possibility of establishing a new Palestinian state, and of thereby resolving the most intractable of the complex of Middle East problems occasioned by the founding and policies of the Israeli state in 1948. However, the June (1967) war also created Israeli overconfidence, whetted the appetites of many Israelis to keep large parts of the occupied territories for new Israeli settlements, and firmly established the Tel Aviv government's policy of overwhelming force frequently used as a deterrent. October 1973 showed the limits of these developments, and brought about a situation in which both sides could more realistically assess the costs and benefits of various courses of action, and requirements for peaceful settlement.

Conditions in the Middle East and in the United States after October 1973, then, strongly supported a review and reformulation of U.S. interests in and policy toward the Middle East and a new United States role there, as well.

OBJECTIVES

United States objectives relevant to Egypt, Iraq, and Syria include the following:

- avoidance of a military confrontation with the U.S.S.R.⁹;
- achievement of a peaceful settlement between Arabs and Israelis;
- maintenance of Israeli security ;
- continued and unimpeded access to oil at a reasonable price;
- demonstration that alliance with the U.S.S.R. is unwise¹⁰;
- demonstration that the U.S. will not permit a Soviet political victory through arms in the region¹¹;
- maintenance of American credibility and of the respect of the United States as a superpower¹²;

⁹ Quandt, "The Middle East Conflict," p. 40; Stephens, "The Great Powers," p. 79.

¹⁰ Stephens, "The Great Powers," p. 79.

¹¹ Kalb and Kalb, *Kissinger*, pp. 471, 512.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 471.

- increased access to Middle East markets¹³;
- productive employment by oil producers of their new wealth.

The United States, like the Soviet Union, places preeminent weight on avoiding a superpower military confrontation in the Middle East. That this priority does not exclude the possibility of such a conflict and that it does not mean the United States or the Soviet Union will in every case defer to each other in a sort of superpower Alphonse and Gaston routine must be evident. The concern to avoid confrontation and, it is hoped, a nuclear war, is simply one among other considerations. Faced with the prospect of significant costs in terms of other objectives, the United States may challenge the Soviet Union under certain conditions. Nevertheless, the parameters within which decisions on confrontation are made seem to be reciprocal perceptions of issue salience. That is, each superpower seems understandably more willing to take a strong stand when it is certain the other will back down. Thus, positions that indicate new firmness are particularly important: they constitute the developing interstices for each power's future policy and the superpower relationship itself in cases of potential confrontation in the Middle East.

Because the United States seeks to avoid a confrontation with the Soviet Union over the Middle East and yet still seeks to optimize its interests there, the precise weight of its requirements is kept purposefully vague. This process is, of course, the essence of politics. For example, the achievement of a resolution (acceptable to all parties) to the Arab-Israeli conflict (including the Palestinian problem) is important because such a resolution would both contribute to the security of oil supply and reduce the danger of a war between the superpowers. Yet, from this fact it cannot safely be concluded that the United States would risk a war to achieve a settlement. Nor can the contrary be presumed. Such decisions are taken on a case-by-case basis and proceed from the unique factors bearing on each instance. What will the impact of a given course of action be on U.S. credibility? on Israeli security? on consequent Soviet perceptions, conclusions, and actions?--these are the kinds of considerations involved in crisis decision-making.¹⁴

¹³ Polk, *The United States*, p. 316.

¹⁴ We are suggesting here only some of the conscious inputs. Equally--some believe, more--important are factors such as bureaucratic politics, organizational process, biological-psychological effects of stress, and the like.

Similarly, we cannot assess in absolute terms the importance of arriving at an Arab-Israeli settlement acceptable to both sides. We assume that a certain minimum Israeli security is a prerequisite to such a settlement, but Israel's security is also a factor of considerable importance in the calculus of American domestic politics, where Israel's supporters retain substantial influence. Thus, U.S. policy with respect to Israel's security must be viewed not only in its derivative role as an immanent part of any feasible settlement, but as well in the context of American political requirements.¹⁵

So, too, the continued flow of oil has a direct impact upon the domestic politics and society of the United States. Decisions, then, must be taken with reference to domestic attitudes and projected attitudes as well as to international factors. Although most of the consideration of this issue has focussed on quantity and cost, quality is also an issue of some importance.

The United States, it is widely believed, has given up its chimeric ideas about "keeping" the Soviet Union out of, or "expelling" it from, the Middle East. Yet, this belief is not consistently supported. The secretary of state has spoken of expelling the Soviet Union, and continued movement toward a settlement has been risked in order to increase the American role at the expense of the Soviet Union's visibility. The processes of disengagement and settlement have evolved in such a way as--and to some degree in order--to minify the Soviet role. These objectives strongly suggest superpower interests are still viewed largely in zero-sum-game terms, even if local interests are not (and after the parties to the dispute seem to have begun to disembarass themselves of zero-sum calculations).

There is, of course, a substantial difference between objectives that support erosion of the Soviet presence and those emphasizing maintenance or growth of the American role. Whether American credibility should have been put on the line, whether past policies have been justified or not, whether the widely perceived American commitment to Israel is wise or

¹⁵The directness of the transfer of Israeli perceptions into American attitudes is less clear and may be changing. See Godfrey Sperling, Jr., "Sympathy Ebbing in U.S. Congress for Israel's Position," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 24, 1975, pp. 1,3. Cf., however, Kenneth Reich, "Percy Works Hard to Explain Himself," *Los Angeles Times*, February 16, 1975, § 1-A, pp. 4-5.

necessary--all of these questions are related, but raising them does not alter the *fact* that U.S. credibility and the American role in the Middle East are perceived in a certain way. To act in such a way as to violate expectations may well raise even greater questions of role in the long run. It is in the shadow of this reality that recent Middle East policy is evolving.

Finally, given the new monetary position of the oil-producing countries and the price and quantity of oil imported by the United States, the growth of commercial relations between the United States and the Arab world is an objective of new-found importance. In fact, U.S. trade with Arab countries was increasing even before the true dimensions of the shift in U.S. oil importation became clear.¹⁶ However, the projected capital flow to oil producing countries establishes beyond doubt the American and global need to channel this capital into investment and commerce. This objective suggests major changes in U.S. attitudes to (and perhaps laws regarding) foreign investment in the United States and American investment in countries such as Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. To date, little progress has been registered in implementing these changes.

POLICIES

Because the policies of the United States in the Middle East have been reviewed and analyzed frequently,¹⁷ we shall address only a few of the major points in the period since the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973.

In pursuance of the objectives we have indicated the United States has exerted a substantial effort to separate the oil supply problem and its associated considerations from the Arab-Israeli issue.¹⁸ Indeed, the two issues were largely and surprisingly discrete before 1973. It was only in 1972 and 1973, as the United States looked to Saudi Arabia to vastly increase its oil production to meet the new projections of American and European energy requirements, but was unresponsive to Saudi suggestions on investment, that the American fears the issues might be mixed began to be realized. By the time of the war, the probability that an embargo might be

¹⁶Alaeddin S. Hreib, *American Trade with the Arab World* (McLean: U.S. Middle East Service Association, 1972).

¹⁷See note above. Several of these studies are unusually rich in detail.

¹⁸See, e.g., Leslie H. Gelb, "Arab Chiefs Send 2 to Washington to See Kissinger," *The New York Times*, February 17, 1974, pp. 1,2.

applied was widely recognized, and the possibility that the "oil weapon" might be used after the war to bring about acceptable progress toward an overall settlement was given substantial credence.

The reason the two issues had not interacted more fully and consistently in the past is important to note here. While both centered on that region generally called "the Middle East," they took place in two different parts of the area--the Arab-Israeli conflict in the eastern Mediterranean, the petroleum production around the Persian Gulf. Thus, the immediate actors in each drama were different. Today, in both cases the roles--and therefore involvement--have proliferated so that there is a considerable cross-participation even on the two issues taken singly.

Most of our consideration will focus on the conflict in the eastern Mediterranean and the oil question as it relates to that conflict. We shall later address some peculiarly Persian Gulf questions.

With a view to eviting a superpower military or nuclear confrontation and to reducing the Soviet role, U.S. policy opposes any increased influence or presence of Soviet armed forces personnel in the Middle East. Increases in Soviet military advisory levels, ship days in the Mediterranean or Indian Oceans, or activity levels at Middle Eastern facilities customarily used by Soviet forces are duly noted and frequently commented upon by spokesmen for various agencies of the executive branch of the U.S. government.

The fear of and determination to avoid a confrontation express themselves in several ways. For example, the secretary of state and president strenuously opposed the creation of a peacekeeping force that would include American and Soviet components.¹⁹ During the October war as well, a real concern of Secretary Kissinger appears to have been that if the Soviets were not *confronted early at a low level* with a combination of strong U.S. Defense support for Israel and signals that the United States was prepared to take a more active role they might initiate a course of action that would result in a *later, but far more serious confrontation*.²⁰ Robert Hunter has

¹⁹ Ultimately, such a force may be the only way to establish a viable peace settlement in the Middle East. Some of the difficulties of an effort along these lines have been examined in Paul A. Jureidini, R.D. McLaurin, and Mohammed Mughisuddin, editors, *The Prospects for Joint U.S.-Soviet Peacekeeping in the Middle East: A Conference Report* (Kensington, Maryland: American Institutes for Research, 1973). See Kalb and Kalb, *Kissinger*, pp. 489, 494, 512.

²⁰ Kalb and Kalb, *Kissinger*, p. 471.

succinctly captured the essence of the dilemma: "The Americans," he says, "have a difficult task. On the one hand they must continually impress upon the Russians the risks of superpower conflict if Israel is directly threatened; on the other hand, they must not allow Israel so much latitude that a super-power conflict becomes inevitable." ²¹

We have already briefly discussed the effort to reduce the Soviet profile and role in the Middle East as an element in the power relations of the two countries in that region. It would not be accurate to suggest the United States has attempted to by-pass Moscow, for a relatively consistent element of U.S. efforts to achieve a settlement has been consultation with the U.S.S.R. Certainly, American leaders recognize the necessity of securing Soviet support for any broad-gauged settlement in the Middle East. We are arguing that, as one expert has written, "it still remains for the United States to accept in positive terms something she has so far accepted only by default--namely, a continuing and active Soviet presence in the Arab Middle East, for the foreseeable future." ²²

The underlying assumption of the opposition to a larger Soviet role is that Soviet influence will grow in the Middle East and American influence wane as a result. Yet, a larger Soviet role does not logically and has not actually had this effect, as Sadat's actions in July 1972 illustrate. We have suggested elsewhere ²³ that the U.S.S.R. cannot compete on even terms with the West as a whole or with the United States in the Middle East. However, neither great power will be in a position to alone meet all of the political, military, economic, or social needs of this diverse region. Neither superpower can be extruded by the actions of the other.

For Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, to be sure, there has been only limited competition, and most of it centered on Egypt. Iraq (since the 1958 revolution) and Syria (for a longer period) have been regarded as Arab radicals at odds with the United States and with attitudes assuring greater sympathy toward Moscow. Recent events only serve to demonstrate anew the adage that there are no permanent friendships or enmities in international politics;

²¹Hunter, "The United States," p. 93.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 94.

²³See the present authors' *The Soviet Union and the Middle East*, esp. Chapter 11.

the improvements in bilateral relations have come about independent of any U.S. effort to reduce Soviet influence or substitute that of the United States.

At the same time, the superpower rivalry calls for political precepts and communications of a wholly different type when applied to U.S.-Soviet bilateral relations. It is important to clarify certain circumstances in which the United States will not back down. That this does not mean all situations should be clarified is equally important. Doubt is often a critical resource in politics. Thus, it would be short-sighted policy that clearly informed the U.S.S.R. in advance the United States would intervene to protect Hussein or some other leader. Circumstances might arise in which such a pledge would be impossible to effectuate with the result of a reduced credibility for U.S. commitments. At the same time, cases such as the Syrian intervention in the Jordanian civil war of September 1970 may be appropriate for communicating implied threats through other than sanctioned channels.²⁴ It is as important, in other words, not to undertake commitments lightly as it is to treat seriously those undertaken. Marginal cases should not be overdrawn. Yet, these are where problems are likely to arise because they *are* in the margin. In those cases, indirect behavior is more appropriate than direct.

The clearest contemporary current of the policy of lowering the Soviet profile is in present attempts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. The substance of these attempts is discussed below. Here we wish to focus on the Soviet-American aspects of the settlement effort.

It has long been disputed whether the Soviet Union is truly interested in a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. We believe the U.S.S.R. is ambivalent: An end to or modification of the conflict is sought to the extent the absence of such a change may (1) undermine the Russo-American detente, (2) threaten a superpower conflict, or (3) subvert the Soviet

²⁴For example, in the Jordanian case, a military transport aircraft under Soviet surveillance flew from a U.S. aircraft carrier to Israel at a crucial point. This was but one part of a brilliant use of communication of doubt, of threat. President Nixon "leaked" his "inclination" to intervene in the event Syria or Iraq threatened Hussein. News media were briefed about (and thus focussed on) ship and troop movements. See Kalb and Kalb, *Kissinger*, p. 207; Quandt, "The Middle East Conflict," p. 47; Dana Adams Schmidt, *Armageddon in the Middle East* (New York: The John Day Company, 1974), pp. 182-183.

position in countries like Egypt and Syria (where no settlement means no return of the occupied territories). An end to or modification of the conflict is not in Moscow's interest to the extent Soviet influence is weakened by a settlement the potential ramifications of which may include reduction of dependence on the Soviet Union for arms. If these countervailing pressures have any meaning for U.S. policy, they suggest that the United States, if it wishes Soviet cooperation toward a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, must increase the costs to the U.S.S.R. of opposing, and the benefits of supporting, a peaceful settlement. We shall carry this theme further in chapter 7.

American oil policy is another factor that strongly supports the achievement of a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. We have noted the attempt to sever the oil and Arab-Israeli questions. This approach and the U.S. initiative in working for a settlement address the problem of security of supply. The same goal as well as that of increasing trade is served by the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia and the other oil producers.

Perceived as equally important at present is the cost of imported oil. Since the dramatic increases of January 1, 1974, a major American objective has been to reduce oil prices. To achieve this goal, several policies have been established that seek to lower prices through a decrease in consumption, less effective cooperation among OPEC members, and increasing cooperation among consuming countries. The effort to bring about a reduction in demand has been a relatively consistent policy of the executive branch, given the fact that a more determined effort could produce widespread dislocation in the U.S. economy. The attempt to break up OPEC is furthered by a reduction in consumption, but is based more directly upon the use of influence on countries like Saudi Arabia to diverge from OPEC trends. The search for consumer cooperation has been futile. Indeed, the United States, probably recognizing the limited chances of success given the diverse interests of oil importing nations, has proceeded to conclude bilateral arrangements with oil producers not unlike those earlier criticized by the U.S.

In spite of all of the foregoing, the political and economic dynamics of the Middle East continue to depend in large measure upon the denouement of the most salient regional problem, the Arab-Israeli conflict. In that arena, U.S. policy has demonstrated strong learning effects over time. Current approaches bear little resemblance to any previous American attempts in the long and tragic history of the post-1948 Middle East.

The United States is currently embarked on an effort to approach the whole of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The unique aspects of the effort are, first, its mixture of personal (Kissinger) and global (Geneva Conference) diplomacy; second, the focus on building momentum toward a general settlement by step-by-step moves directly tied to the general settlement; third, the bilateral nature of what is at base a multilateral approach; fourth, the emphasis on trust--and on building it--as the major ingredient in the process; fifth, the well-managed mixture of publicity and secrecy (no small task); and finally the admirable U.S. disregard of public statements by the parties to the conflict.

While it has long been axiomatic that when fundamental requirements are in conflict no agreement can be reached, American policy assumes that the *essentials* of each party are not in conflict, that a settlement can be achieved that meets minimum requirements of each side. The major issues can be subsumed under the rubric "political independence and territorial integrity," and for each side a substantial portion of the minimum requirements deals with aspects of status--for Israel, recognition, the end of the state of belligerency, peace treaties, and diplomatic relations; for the Arabs, return of the occupied territories, establishment of a Palestinian state, and international or Arab control of at least the Arab part of Jerusalem. These needs are not contradictory.

Prerequisites to a lasting peace go far beyond the minimum requirements for a settlement. The focal point of these prerequisites is trust, the belief that the other parties intend to fulfill the commitments into which they entered in order to bring about the settlement agreement. Clearly, American policy is directed toward building this trust en route to a settlement that meets the minimum requirements of both sides. To date, the persuasion to which the United States has resorted has been aimed at Israel. This is true for several reasons. First, this is where greatest U.S. influence lies. Second, Israel as the preeminent military power in the region is in a position to make certain types of military concessions the Arab states cannot make. Third, Israel's physical position (in control of the occupied territories) is unique: of all the parties to the conflict only Israel possesses something tangible that is both vital to peace and negotiable--the Arab territories taken in 1967. The security guarantees Israel may

require will only be offered if the territory should be returned and can only be employed under those circumstances. Thus, it is to Israel the United States looks for most of the important initial concessions. The problem is that Israel, like Syria (and Egypt to a lesser extent), does not speak with one voice. Israeli leaders, too, answer to a diverse constituency that perceives--with alarm, in many cases--the machinations preliminary to the settlement with eyes and values very different from those of the prime minister and his immediate advisors.²⁵ Arab governments are more effective at communicating to selected audiences in other Arab states than in communicating to Israeli audiences. Similarly, Israel has not been adept at communicating to diverse audiences in Arab countries. The United States seeks to bridge this gap by restricting the public communications role to rumor.

The foregoing has addressed general Middle East policy issues that are clearly relevant to Egypt and Syria and less important to Iraq. Iraq's primary focus of activity relevant to the United States is in the Persian Gulf. There, Iraq and Iran continue the state of friction that has long characterized their relations. U.S. policy has encouraged Iran and Saudi Arabia to consider themselves the guardians of the Gulf. That such a role for these two powers is anathema to Iraq is scarcely surprising: Iran is perceived as Iraq's main threat, and the Saudi Arabian and Iraqi regimes are antagonistic as well. U.S. recognition that Iran is the dominant power in the Gulf has led to a policy of heavy arms sales to Tehran.²⁶ Only four countries in the world²⁷ have purchased more military equipment from the United States. Only twelve countries have received more from the Military Assistance Program, most of them European.²⁸ Only eight countries (four

²⁵See A.R. Wagner, "Impact of the 1973 War on Key Israeli Groups," draft report prepared for the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) (OASD [ISA]), December 1974; and A.R. Wagner, "Societal Constraints on Israeli Security Policy Options," draft report prepared for OASD (ISA), February 1975.

²⁶U.S. sales to Iran amount to a de facto determination to sell to the Shah whatever he wishes. For an interesting analysis, see Michael Getler, "Long-term Impact of Arms Sales to Persian Gulf Questioned," *The Washington Post*, January 30, 1975 pp. A1, A14.

²⁷The German Federal Republic, the United Kingdom, Israel, and Canada. U.S. Defense Security Assistance Agency, *Foreign Military Sales and Military Assistance Facts: April 1974* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1974), pp. 16-17.

²⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

European, plus China, Israel, Korea, and Turkey) have received more from the U.S. military assistance and sales programs than Iran. The build-up of arms in Iran has coincided with a sizeable increase in Iraq. U.S. policy by supplying Iran with virtually any and all equipment requested has forced Iraq to turn to the Soviet Union for arms.

While American policy initiatives are making progress toward an Arab-Israeli settlement and are facilitating a reconciliation of regimes such as those in Egypt and Syria with the United States, U.S. policies in the Gulf feed the extant conflict between Iran and Iraq. This is particularly so when Iran is using its newly acquired American arms inside Iraq in support of a large seditious (secessionist) group.

CHAPTER SIX

BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.

TENOR OF U.S. EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

Prior to World War II, U.S.-Egyptian relations were limited to cultural and economic activities. After the war, the United States and Britain endeavored to bring Egypt into a Middle East defense pact designed to keep the Soviet Union out of the region. For a variety of historical and political reasons, including the American involvement in the creation of Israel, the continuous presence of the British troops on Egyptian soil, and the absence of enmity toward the Soviet Union, the Egyptian government did not join the proposed Middle East defense pact in which a keen interest had been expressed by Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan.¹

The overthrow of the monarch in July 1952 and the replacement of it by a group of young military officers intensified the U.S.-Egyptian relations on diplomatic, economic, and military levels. In an effort to prevent further deterioration of the Western position in the Arab world, the United States urged Britain to evacuate its troops from the Suez Canal Zone.² During the Anglo-Egyptian talks on the Canal Zone, U.S. diplomatic efforts were directed toward finding a mutually acceptable solution that would satisfy the Egyptian nationalists' demands for the evacuation of the British troops from the Canal Zone and also would not place in jeopardy the Western strategic interests in the region. As the British were willing to concede the Egyptian demands, it was hoped that the Egyptian military junta would consider joining the proposed Middle East defense organization.

¹Historically, only Turkey and Iran had faced and suffered from the Russian-Soviet expansion. The Arabs knew little and cared even less about the alleged threat of the Soviet Union against the Middle East.

²Western prestige had begun to deteriorate soon after World War I when Britain and France failed to keep promises made during the war; and the Balfour Declaration of November 1917 and revelation of the existence of secret treaties between the French and the British governments (the Sykes-Picot agreements) created among the Arabs a sense of deep distrust toward the West. The creation of Israel in 1948 and the British reluctance to leave the Suez Canal Zone exacerbated the anti-West feeling among the vast majority of the Arab and other Muslim populations of the region.

However, for a variety of reasons, these expectations were not fulfilled.³ Finally, after protracted negotiations, Britain agreed in July 1954 to evacuate the Canal Zone within 20 months. The only major concession that Egypt made was its willingness to turn over sections of the Zone to the British in the event of foreign aggression against Turkey. (During these discussions, Britain and the United States had asked Egypt to include Iran in this category, but Cairo turned down this request.)

Soon after the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian agreement on July 27, 1954, the United States and Britain continued their efforts to establish a military defense pact in the region. After a series of negotiations between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Britain, and the United States, the four Middle Eastern countries plus Britain entered into a defense pact that came to be known as the Baghdad Pact. Although the United States, for fear of an adverse reaction from Egypt and Saudi Arabia, did not join the pact as an active member, it was not spared hostile Egyptian criticism for Washington's role in creating this pact.

Despite this criticism (or because of it?), the United States endeavored to maintain good relations with Cairo by offering to finance the initial cost of building the Aswan Dam, a prestigious economic development project that was anticipated to bring under plough two million more acres and to generate enough electricity for all the nation's needs. However, for a variety of domestic and international considerations the United States withdrew the offer on the grounds that "a heavy 'mortgage' had been imposed on future Egyptian cotton crops by Egyptian-Soviet bloc arms and industrial pact."⁴

U.S.-Egyptian relations, which were already under great strains, because of the Baghdad Pact and Western refusal to sell arms to Egypt, reached a new low after the United States withdrew its Aswan Dam offer on July 19, 1956. These relations, however, improved during the Suez crisis when the United States firmly opposed the British-French-Israeli tripartite

³For a comprehensive analysis of this aspect of U.S.-Egyptian relations, see John C. Campbell, *Defense of the Middle East: Problems of American Policies*, revised edition (New York: Harper, 1960); and for a British perspective of the problem, see Elizabeth Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East, 1914-1956* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963).

⁴Dan Hofstadter (ed.), *Egypt and Nasser*, vol. 1, 1952-56, (New York: Facts on File, 1973), pp. 124-125.

aggression against Egypt. It was primarily due to U.S. efforts that the three aggressors were constrained to withdraw their troops from Egypt.

During the late 1950s a series of consecutive Middle East crises caused a new rift between Washington and Cairo. After the Suez crisis, the U.S. government pronounced the so-called Eisenhower Doctrine that was designed to provide support to any Middle East state that felt threatened by international communism. President Nasser opposed the Eisenhower Doctrine because he perceived it as a U.S. stratagem to intervene in Middle Eastern affairs. In September 1957, soon after the pronouncement of the Doctrine, a Syrian-Turkish crisis broke out which threatened the Middle East peace. Because of strong Communist influence in Syria at the time, many Arab newspapers linked the Syrian-Turkish crisis to the Eisenhower Doctrine and said that Turkey would intervene militarily to prevent a Communist takeover in Syria. Most Arab newspapers assumed that Turkey was being encouraged and supported by the United States.⁵ The 1958 Lebanese crisis, the landing of U.S. troops there, and the overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy in July that year added to the U.S.-Egyptian tension which had been generated by the Eisenhower Doctrine and other factors mentioned earlier.

For a brief period during the Kennedy Administration, U.S.-Egyptian relations improved and there were major economic and cultural transactions between the two countries. This rapprochement, however, did not survive President Kennedy's death.

Accusing Washington of collaboration with Israel in the June 1967 war, Cairo severed diplomatic ties with the United States. Although the United States and Egypt had had a continuous dialogue on the Arab-Israeli problems, these ties were not restored until 1974. During this period, the United States arranged a cease-fire along the Suez Canal and was seriously involved in trying to find a mutually acceptable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since the 1973 cease-fire between the Israeli forces and the Arab forces, the United States has been accepted by most of the Arab states, especially by Egypt, as an "honest broker" who played a central role in arranging for the Geneva Conference of December 1973,

⁵Hofstadter, *Egypt and Nasser* (vol. 2), pp. 26-28.

which preceded the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement accord in January, and the Syrian-Israeli disengagement agreement in May 1974. Since the October War, U.S.-Egyptian relations have improved dramatically. This has been reflected in the numerous trips to Cairo of Secretary of State Kissinger, of President Nixon, and of a number of other high U.S. officials. Furthermore, the United States and Egypt have entered into several food, commercial, and technical agreements designed to strengthen further the diplomatic and economic ties between the two states.

TENOR OF U.S.-IRAQI RELATIONS

Prior to the overthrow of the monarchy in Iraq, U.S. relations with Baghdad were marked by cordiality and friendship. This cordiality was based on the commonality of interest in keeping the Soviet Union out of the Middle East. In the 1940s, Iraq had faced a serious Soviet-backed Kurdish revolt and the Baghdad regime was wary of the Soviet intentions in the Region. In April 1954, Iraq accepted U.S. military assistance and in February 1955 joined the U.S.-sponsored Baghdad Pact.

After the Qassem coup, Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact in March 1959 and two months later terminated its military relations with the United States. During the 1960s, the two countries entered into a series of cultural, economic, food, and technical agreement designed to aid Iraq in its development projects.

The June 1967 war, however, interrupted these ties and created a serious rift between the two countries. Immediately after the Arab-Israeli hostilities began, Baghdad severed diplomatic ties with Washington, declared an oil embargo on the United States, and announced a boycott of American goods. Since then, diplomatic relations have remained suspended; Iraq maintains an Iraqi "interest section" in the Indian Embassy in Washington, and the United States has a couple of diplomats heading the U.S. "interest section" in the Belgian Embassy in Baghdad.

Since the end of the October War, Iraq has started to increase its commercial transactions with the United States. This is reflected in a quantum jump in Iraqi imports of U.S. goods, which went from \$34.4 million in 1973 to \$210.8 million last year (1974).

TENOR OF U.S.-SYRIAN RELATIONS

The tenor of Syrian-American bilateral relations has been distinctly negative virtually from the end of World War II until the present. Although Syrian attitudes toward the West in general have been at least somewhat hostile for centuries (but particularly in this century), the image of the United States was a positive one before the war. American support for the partition of Palestine and the establishment of Israel adversely affected that image, however, and the facts that (1) United States support was the most important reason Israel was established and (2) Syria has consistently considered itself the surviving Arab state most deeply involved in and affected by the dissembling of Palestine--these have also contributed to developing hostility. Another factor has been the sizeable capital flows into Israel from American Jewry.

One of the most crucial reasons for the rancor in U.S.-Syrian relations has been the almost personal sense of betrayal. The United States was directly involved in the 1947 election and then engineered the 1949 coup by Husni Zaim.⁶ Since 1947, a great many Syrians believe the United States has covertly attempted to steer Syrian policy and determine the Syrian leadership.

The Tripartite Declaration of May 25, 1950, viewed in Syria as another attempt to determine and control the destiny of sovereign Arab states, constituted another step in the deterioration of U.S.-Syrian relations. Although the United States--by the terms of the Declaration--indicated Washington would avoid playing a primary supplier role to either side of the Arab-Israeli dispute, the explicit purpose of the Declaration was to control weapons supplies and thus the options of the Arabs and Israel.

The international history of the early 1950s must give a prominent role to the American effort to construct a ring of alliances and bases around the Soviet Union, a postwar *cordon sanitaire* in the name of "containment." The alliances followed in the path of the successful North Atlantic Treaty that gave birth to NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization). The Middle East was one of the regions in which such an alliance was sought, but, like Southeast Asia, the Middle East and its relationship

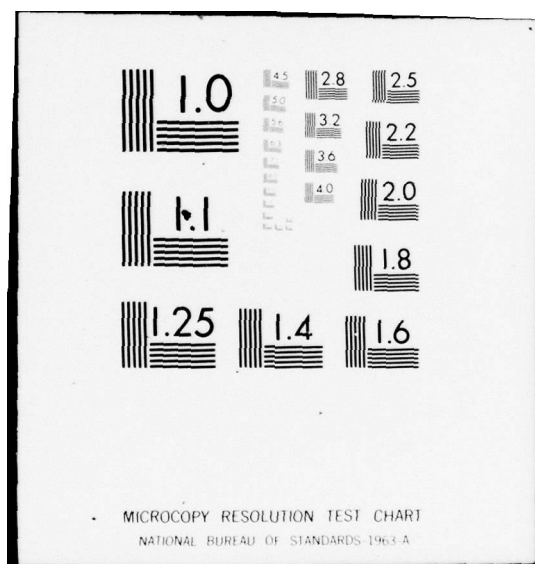
⁶ Miles Copeland, *The Game of Nations* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), pp. 36-46.

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to the West was utterly different from the ties of the North Atlantic countries with each other. The analogy was spurious, the alliance a major error in U.S. diplomacy in the Middle East.⁷ When the Baghdad Pact was eventually established, Syria was one of its most vehement critics, resenting the injection of cold war politics and structures into the Middle East.

Thus, the two fundamental elements of U.S. policy in the Middle East-- the philosophy of the Tripartite Declaration⁸ and the establishment of a regional security pact against the U.S.S.R.--contributed directly to the deterioration of relations with Syria. Syrian political rhetoric also directly aided the cause. The growing strength of the Baath and other anti-Western groups in Syria accelerated the embitterment of relations, particularly after 1954. Moreover, Syrian anti-Westernism was not viewed as merely one among many examples of xenophobia. During the mid-1950s, "Syria became the political and cultural mecca of the Arab world."⁹

In 1956, following the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt, the United States position was probably decisive in securing Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai. In the Arab world, however, most of the credit for the withdrawal was given to Moscow which had threatened to use nuclear weapons. Moreover, the Suez crisis increased anti-Westernism in Syria. Earlier in the same year, Syria concluded its first arms agreement with the Soviet Union,¹⁰ an initiative resulting in a U.S. note of concern to Damascus.

In January 1957, the United States government, under the so-called "Eisenhower Doctrine," indicated that the U.S. would assist any Middle Eastern country overtly threatened by armed aggression from any country "controlled by International Communism."¹¹ Syrian public opinion and the

⁷ We are only considering the effects of the alliance in the Levant, eastern Mediterranean, and other Arab countries, not in Iran and Turkey where the situation was as different from that of the Middle East as Middle Eastern problems were from those of Europe.

⁸ France and Israel concluded a secret agreement in 1954 that in fact violated the Tripartite Declaration.

⁹ Tabitha Petran, *Syria* (New York: Praeger, 1972), p. 111.

¹⁰ Officially, the agreement was with Czechoslovakia. However, it was recognized even at the time that the accord was in fact a Syrian-Soviet transaction.

¹¹ Message from President Dwight D. Eisenhower to Congress, January 5, 1957. PL 85-7, 71 Stat. 5, approved March 9, 1957.

government in Damascus both rejected the doctrine,¹² and indeed very few governments welcomed it.

A major crisis erupted in Syrian-American relations in 1957. Throughout the year, American diplomats leaked (fabricated) rumors of a large arms build-up and of Syrian aggressive intentions. Through Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the United States sought to brake the Syrian movement toward the Soviet Union. In early August, Khaled al-Azm, the Syrian defense minister, secured a commitment in Moscow that would result in extensive Soviet economic and military assistance. About a week later, Syria expelled three American diplomats for taking part in a plot to overthrow the regime. (The Syrian ambassador to the United States in turn was asked to leave Washington American assistance was airlifted to Jordan, and announced as well for Iraq, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. At the end of August Syria was accused by Secretary of State Dulles of threatening Turkey, a charge that was taken seriously nowhere in the Middle East for reasons shown in table 6-1.

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Table 6-1

A Comparison of Syrian and Turkish Military Strength (1957)

	Syria	Turkey
ARMY SIZE	50,000	500,000
• EXPERIENCE	None	Korean War
• EQUIPMENT	Personnel not yet trained	Armed for a decade by U.S.
• TRAINING	Poor	Substantial U.S. training
• DEPLOYMENT	Israeli front ties down	Few needed on other fronts

Ultimately, the processes and dynamics involved in this crisis¹³ contributed

¹² U.S. aid to King Hussein of Jordan in 1957 increased the intensity of this rejection.

¹³ The most detailed account of the crisis is in Petran, *Syria*, pp. 118-125. See also Richard F. Nyrop, et al., *Area Handbook for Syria* (Washington, D.C.: The American University, Foreign Area Studies, 1971), pp. 181-182; William R. Polk, *The United States and the Arab World*, revised ed., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), pp. 281-282; Miles Copeland, *The Game of Nations* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), p. 187; Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965) pp. 203-5; and Kennet Love, *Suez: The Twice-Fought War* (London: Longmans, 1969), p. 653. For a very different interpretation, see Gordon H. Torrey, *Syrian Politics and the Military, 1945-1958* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1964), chapter 11; and George Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1971), pp. 105-106.

substantially to the Syrian-Egyptian union of 1958-1961, but in the meantime U.S.-Syrian relations had reached a nadir from which only slight recovery has been made. By the end of 1957, Syria was the most anti-Western nation in the Middle East.

Syrian animosity toward the United States abated slightly during the union period, but the return to power of the Baath in 1963 saw a renewed downturn that under the neo-Baath (from 1966) gathered momentum into the pre-June 1967 war period. These bilateral tensions were central to the crisis preceding that war. During the pre-war exchange of declarations and accusations, the Jadid regime charged the United States with using the Sixth Fleet to support Israel and threaten Syria. Besides accusing the United States of participating in a conspiracy or unwritten alliance against the Arabs, Damascus suggested that certain U.S. organizations were engaging in espionage directed against the Arab world.¹⁴ We have noted (chapter 4) that sectarian unrest was prevalent at this time. An atheistic article in an army magazine aroused particular consternation. Radio Damascus accused the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency of instigating the article. On June 1, all U.S. libraries and cultural centers were closed. Violent demonstrations against the United States erupted. On June 6, the second day of the war, Syria charged that the United States was contributing military help to Israel and broke off diplomatic relations.

Following the war, the rupture of the U.S.-Syrian relationship became more complete, as Syria closed all American cultural institutes and schools in the country; declared a boycott on all American goods and banned U.S. films; and embargoed Syrian oil to the United States (resumed in September).

Soon after Richard M. Nixon became U.S. president, his administration indicated a need for new American initiatives--an indication Syria denounced as it did the Rogers Peace Plan (the latter as a "surrender" to Israel). Assad is rumored to have favored the Rogers Plan, but the Baath Regional Command policy statement (issued as Assad ousted Jadid) rejects the plan.¹⁵

The incident precipitating the Assad coup was the Jordanian civil war. Once again, the governments of Syria and the United States found themselves on opposite sides of a conflict. The issue dividing them was not the

¹⁴The American Friends of the Middle East (AFME) was funded by the Central Intelligence Agency.

¹⁵Of course, given the narrow base of the Assad coup, such a rejection was necessary for legitimacy.

Palestinian-Jordanian imbroglio (on which their views, while opposed, were not a matter of bilateral tension), but, rather, the direct Syrian involvement in the fighting. Syrian equipment and personnel were observed moving toward the border. Because superpower cooperation had progressed greatly over the cold war era, the U.S. government sought Soviet assurances on Syrian activities. As a result, when Syrian forces did in fact cross the border, the issue became one affecting the bilateral relations of the U.S.S.R. and the United States. Finally, Syrian forces, unprotected from Jordanian air strikes (since Assad refused to give air support) and under Soviet pressure to withdraw, returned across the border just before U.S.-Israeli plans on intervention were to be implemented.¹⁶

Within six months after Assad replaced Jadid in Syria, the new Damascus regime informed Washington (unofficially) that it favored consideration of the renewal of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Recognizing that the United States seemed to be embarking on another attempt at settling the Arab-Israeli problem, Assad did not wish to be isolated.¹⁷ By late November of 1971, however, the tentative move toward improvement had failed. Throughout much of 1971, the United States pointed to Soviet military assistance to Syria as destabilizing and in turn sent its own equipment to Israel. This pattern continued into 1972 and 1973 when the two countries' relationship suffered further as a result of (1) Syrian nationalization of Iraq Petroleum Company holdings in Syria, (2) the firmer U.S. stand in the United Nations in support of Israeli air raids, (3) continued U.S. warnings about large-scale Soviet military assistance to Syria, (4) the Syrian arrest of an American student and the U.S. assistant defense attaché in Amman, (5) the American refusal to allow a senior Syrian U.N. diplomat to enter the United States, and (6) American pressure on the Soviet Union to allow greater numbers of Soviet Jews to emigrate.

At the same time, the new Syrian posture under Assad which tacitly

¹⁶ Had the plans been put into effect, Syria's relations with the United States would have sunk lower, for Tel Aviv made clear to Washington Israel's interest in invading Syria as well as "protecting" Hussein. See Kalb and Kalb, *Kissinger*, p. 206. The best accounts of the Israeli-Syrian-U.S. aspects of the Jordanian civil war are Kalb and Kalb, *Kissinger*, pp. 198-209; William B. Quandt, "The Middle East Conflict in US Strategy, 1970-1971," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, I, no. 1 (Autumn, 1971) pp. 46-48; Dana Adams Schmidt, *Armageddon in the Middle East* (New York: John Day, 1974), pp. 182-183; Benjamin Welles, *The New York Times*, October 8, 1970.

¹⁷ *Le Monde* May 7, 1971; John K. Cooley, "Syria Chides U.S. Leadership," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 19, 1971, p. 10.

accepted the peaceful settlement concept reduced the fundamental conflicts between Syria and the United States even as the number of lesser issues separating them increased. To the extent this fact may be understood to suggest a true "relationship," however, it is misleading. In fact since well before the 1967 war when diplomatic relations were severed there had been little substantial contact between Syria and the United States.

The October 1973 war completely changed the nature of Syrian-American interaction. At first, the massive U.S. arms airlift to Israel appeared initially to complete the abandonment by the United States of its relations with the Arab world and the process of U.S. ostracism. Secretary of State Kissinger's initiatives toward troop disengagement (as a step in the direction of an overall peace settlement between the Arab states and Israel) suddenly reversed this effect, however. The personal inclinations of Sadat and bargaining facility of Kissinger led to a successful set of negotiations. Assad and Kissinger met meanwhile in mid-December. The American secretary of state and the Syrian president encountered enough common interests to rebuild U.S.-Syrian relations on the firmest ground available for well over a decade. Suddenly, almost miraculously, there was room for hope in and an upbeat to contacts between the two countries.

The new tone in U.S.-Syrian relations continued into 1974, despite strong pressures. Assad, for example, attempted to persuade the Arab oil producers to maintain an embargo on oil to the United States in order to increase the American incentive to bring about a partial Israeli withdrawal on the Golan. Yet, American diplomats seemed to understand his purpose and finally achieved agreement on a disengagement on the Syrian front.

Moreover, the new cordiality in U.S.-Syrian relations has not been confined to the political realm.¹⁸ The Assad regime's leadership is very hopeful of attracting American investment. To this end, the United States was invited to participate in the Damascus Fair in 1974. Similarly, cultural exchanges have begun to develop once again, as well.

This is not to say that a future of cooperative and friendly relations between Syria and the United States is assured in perpetuity. Indeed, there are major differences of approach between the two countries.

¹⁸ James F. Clarity, "Improved U.S. Ties Expected in Syria," *The New York Times*, June 5, 1974, p. C15.

COMMONALITIES AND CONFLICTS : U.S.-SYRIAN RELATIONS

Political and Military Affairs

Because the preeminent issue in the Middle East today is the Arab-Israeli conflict, because the United States and Syria have for so long disagreed over this problem, and because the immediate future of their relations will focus on subjects raised by this conflict, this is the proper initial topic for treatment here.

Achievement of a peaceful settlement between the Arab states and Israel is among the most important of U.S. objectives in the Middle East, since the absence of such a settlement threatens at least four U.S. interests--avoidance of a superpower confrontation, a dependable supply of oil, protection and furtherance of U.S. commercial interests in the region, and overflight and transit rights. The current Syrian regime would also like to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, so long as such a settlement embraces return of the occupied Golan Heights and the recognition of Palestinian national rights. (While this ingredient is ill-defined, Syria will accept whatever the Palestine Liberation Organization accepts, presumably the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip.) A conflict between the two countries' interests and objectives may arise only insofar as the United States, in its parallel effort to maintain Israeli security in a settlement, encounters Israeli perceptions of security needs that do not permit of a return of the Golan, or of the essentials of a "recognition of Palestinian national rights," or that place unacceptable conditions on such adjustments. It is our belief that today--i.e., with the Assad regime in power--Israeli and Syrian minimum needs can be met. It is our further belief that it is in Israel's interest and the United States' interest to ensure that Assad's position of accommodation¹⁹ is reinforced by positive signs of flexibility and responsiveness on the part of Israel.

While Syria is not concerned with maintaining Israeli security, current Syrian policy is not in conflict with that objective, as long as the political entity of "Israel" does not exceed the geographical limits of the Israel of June 4, 1967. Minor adjustments of borders on the West Bank or

¹⁹ Assad is the most accommodating Syrian leader Israel is likely to be able to deal with for some time. He has pushed the limits of Syrian moderation toward Israel, and has only succeeded because of his relatively--for Syria--strong domestic position.

in Gaza are probably acceptable to Syria (if acceptable to the PLO), and Jerusalem is negotiable. Restrictions in perpetuity on Syrian sovereignty are probably not acceptable. That is, while Syria is prepared to accept demilitarized zones or international forces on the Golan, it should not be presumed that these conditions will endure forever. Syrian acceptance of an indefinitely timed demilitarized zone or perpetually demilitarized zone must be viewed in the historical perspective of the demilitarized Rhineland after World War I. International forces would be less amenable to Syrian control, depending upon their composition and terms of reference. Even the requirements of Israeli security, then, defined reasonably, do not impose conflicts on the pattern of U.S. and Syrian interests.

Prior to the achievement of a settlement, the United States and Syria will continue to experience policy conflicts on the approach to the overall agreement as long as Washington presses for bilateral deals and a step-by-step philosophy. Such an approach is contrary to Syrian interests and endangers the Assad regime itself. Moreover, if Assad did not oppose the approach his government would be in even greater jeopardy. Moreover, reaching an agreement on the Golan parallel to--or even preliminary to--a Sinai accord does not alter this situation. Indeed, an agreement concerning partial Israeli withdrawal from the Golan makes Assad even more vulnerable to some constituencies (as it improves his position vis-a-vis others).

*Only a multilateral conference including the PLO (whether as an independent delegation or included in the Jordanian, Egyptian, or Syrian delegations) can garner maximum Syrian flexibility and support.*²⁰

Another pre-settlement area of conflict concerns the relative power of the U.S.S.R. and the United States. Although Assad's regime definitely seeks American investment and commerce, aspires to an across-the-board improvement in relations, and anticipates an increase in interaction, Syria will continue to depend upon the Soviet Union for political support (including leverage on the United States, Israel, and other Arab countries) and military

²⁰ We do not, however, discount the potential favorable impact of secret face-to-face meetings between Arab and Israeli leaders. Assad would probably participate in such encounters, *after* they had gone on for some time, if he felt secrecy could be maintained. The suspicion and distrust are far stronger between Israel and Syria than between Israel and any other Arab country. Such encounters could help to overcome these feelings.

hardware and training at least until an agreement with Israel is consummated. There is no alternative to Soviet military supply as far as the Arab-Israeli conflict is concerned. Other countries for a variety of reasons cannot dependably provide the range of weapons at the level of sophistication or in the quantity desired. Even if such a source were available, the Syrian armed forces have already been trained in Soviet doctrine with Soviet equipment and use this equipment, so that interchangeability is also a factor.

Syria will continue, then, to advance the Soviet position in the movement toward a settlement. This is consonant with Syria's interests (since Damascus looks to Moscow for political leverage) and required by the Soviet Union. While it conflicts with short-run American interests, we believe that *a prominent role for the Soviet Union in the conclusion of an Arab-Israeli agreement* is prerequisite to such an agreement and *is therefore in the long-run best interests of the United States*. Thus, while we see a policy conflict here, we do not believe true Syrian and American interests are in conflict on this matter. Following a settlement, we would anticipate a marked improvement in Syrian-American relations. Should the settlement be effective, there will be a decrease in Syrian arms purchases and movement toward source diversification, both of which would support U.S. interests. ²¹

We expect Syria to try to continue to improve its military position until the conclusion of an agreement. Most of the improvement will be in the area of air defense, but advanced aircraft and sophisticated stand-off weapons, ECM, and ECCM, and surface-to-surface missiles will also be a part of the program. Such improvements are contrary to American interests in that they increase the threat perceived by Israel and, therefore, the demands on U.S. technology and inventory by Israeli leaders.

Economic and Social Programs

There are no important conflicts of policy or interest between Syria and the United States in respect of economic or social programs. On the contrary, these fields offer a vast arena in which to develop greater cooperative interaction.

Access to oil is an interest the United States and Syria share: Syria

²¹ The threat to Israel would be reduced (so Israeli grant military needs from the United States would diminish), and the Soviet role in and influence over Syria would shrink.

seeks to increase its oil production and the United States requires greater oil imports. However, Syria is not in a position to supply any significant quantity of oil to the United States for two reasons: First, Syria is a marginal oil producer; second, Syrian oil is of very poor quality and for the most part has only limited industrial uses.

It will be important, on the one hand, to communicate to Syria the stringent limitations on U.S. economic assistance, and, on the other hand, to attempt to treat Syria equitably in this regard considering the sizeable volume of private sector financial assistance provided Israel.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- Egypt has had a relatively stable government for many years. There seems little reason to question the continued stability of Egypt. Iraq and Syria are more stable than in the past. Yet, stability in each depends to a large extent on the personalities currently directing the country. In Syria, particularly, Assad's tenure will also require sensitivity to emerging issues and fluid coalitions. Egypt's and Syria's leaders are well-disposed to the United States. There are indications that Saddam Hussein may have similar predispositions (notwithstanding rhetoric to the contrary).

- Egypt, Iraq, and Syria have all made overtures to improve and increase their relationships with the United States. Iraq's interest in this regard is almost exclusively commercial in nature, but all three governments recognize America's growing role in the Middle East.

- For a significant improvement of U.S. bilateral relations with Egypt, Iraq, and Syria (but particularly Iraq and Syria), a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is necessary.

- The nature of U.S.-Iranian relations (like U.S.-Israeli ties) strictly limits the potential of U.S.-Iraqi cooperation; prejudices the American image in the Arab world; and gives the Soviet Union added space to maneuver in its interaction with that region. (At the same time, Egypt and Syria, particularly, understand the exigencies that constrain and impel American policy vis-a-vis Israel.)

- There is a greater recognition than heretofore among the elites of Egypt, Iraq, and Syria of the limitations on Soviet capacity to facilitate (much less force) a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

- The new American-Egyptian relationship appears to have both a firm enough foundation and sufficiently threatening ramifications to seriously concern the U.S.S.R., which has made some vague movements in the direction of an anti-Egyptian, anti-American coalition based upon Iraq, PDRY, and Libya. (The Soviet perception does not accord with our conclusion concerning the prerequisites to a long-term improvement in relations, but that conclusion pertains more to Iraq and Syria and is not, in any event, based on Soviet perceptions.)

- The 1967 and 1973 wars in the Middle East have ushered in a new era in Arab-Israeli perceptions and affairs. The first conflict forced the Arabs to accept the concept of an Israeli state and substantially increased the Arab need for a settlement; the second demonstrated the Israeli need and established the parameters of that settlement.

- Egypt and Syria will accept in principle the existence of Israel within the territorial boundaries of 4 June 1967. Iraq will probably accept the existence of Israel within the boundaries of the 1947 U.N. General Assembly resolution, and probably would acquiesce in an Arab-Israeli settlement acceptable to Egypt, Syria, and the PLO, but only after the fact.

- Prerequisites to any settlement include the return of all of the Golan Heights to Syria and of all of the Sinai to Egypt and the establishment of a Palestinian state. Additional compensation to the Palestinians displaced from 1947 to 1975 and a resolution to the Jerusalem status issue may also be necessary elements, but these problems are more amenable to settlement.

- In spite of growing European involvement in the Middle East, primarily in the area of commerce and investment, only the superpowers "make a difference" in terms of political influence and military power. On the other hand, the aggregate weight of the middle powers in economic and cultural affairs is staggering and forecloses the possibility of extruding the West from the Middle East. Western middle powers do not necessarily support the United States, and are viewed in Egypt, Iraq, and Syria as avenues--however inadequate--for leverage on the United States.

- The much-vaunted "options" for military procurement, based upon economic considerations, are in fact few. Only the Soviet Union can adequately support Egypt, Iraq, and Syria in terms of quantity and level of sophistication of arms, strategic and tactical doctrine, training, ammunition and spare parts interchangeability, and the like. Egypt has been driven to diversify, but cannot do so effectively in the near term and maintain its military forces at the desired state of readiness. Iraq cannot attempt diversification in the near future. Syria is in a similar situation until an Arab-Israeli settlement is achieved.

- Egypt and Syria are weaker today than before the October 1973 war. Egypt's losses in manpower (especially trained tank crews) are equaled by the shortage of equipment due to the refusal of the Soviet Union to resupply

materiel lost during the conflict. Missile stocks are badly depleted. The French arms agreement cannot but marginally affect this shortage. Syria's manpower losses were severe and cannot be compensated for by equipment at this time. Iraq is probably stronger than in 1973 as a result of very substantial increases of equipment. (However, the Iraqi performance against the Kurds has been unimpressive. Training, leadership, and innovation are absent.)

- On the other hand, Syria has more and much better equipment than in 1973, and is a more experienced combat force that can be expected to address some of the command-control and doctrinal weaknesses demonstrated in that war. Egyptian forces, too, are now more experienced and will apply themselves to improving areas of demonstrated problems.

- Egypt and Syria will not carry out another attack on Israel before the fall of 1975 and will probably avoid such an attack for the foreseeable future as long as progress toward a settlement (including return of the occupied territories) is evident or possible.

- Iraq's army is the most politicized in the sense that it is permeated by Baath party political officers who have greater authority than unit commanders.

- The arms race in the Middle East has turned another corner. Even before (and certainly after) the 1967 war, the regional arms race involved a high volume of weapons acquisitions. Now, to this quantitative arms race of substantial proportions has been added a qualitative arms race. Where the Soviet Union had only provided two-step-behind weapons systems before 1973, Iraq and Syria are now receiving much more sophisticated materiel.

- The qualitative and quantitative arms race dimensions will result in greater demands on the United States in terms both of the amount of military support for Israel (in grant assistance, sales, and related training and FOS) and of the level of sophistication. As more advanced systems are provided to Israel, however, the possibility of compromise of U.S. technological leads is increased.

- Of the three Arab countries addressed in this research, only Iraq is a major oil producer. Iraq, of all important Arab oil producers, is the only one anxious to unreservedly maximize oil production. Given the American interest in a steady, rapid growth of oil on the international

market, Iraq and the United States share an interest. The United States should explore with Iraq the means by which Iraqi oil production may be quickly increased. Although Iraq's oil may not be shipped directly to the United States, it will exert additional pressure on prices and will free other stocks for shipment to U.S. markets.

Egypt

For the first time in 25 years, Egypt has expressed a willingness to recognize the State of Israel on the condition that it must return all the Arab territory conquered by the Jewish state in June 1967. Although there are domestic groups which oppose a peaceful settlement with Israel, presently President Sadat commands sufficient support to implement his policy of peaceful coexistence with Israel. In addition to the domestic opposition, Sadat also faces resistance from several foreign groups and states who, for a variety of reasons, do not agree with Sadat's approach to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Although Sadat continues to maintain a firm control over the governmental system in the country (see Figure 1), he has lifted the press censorship, stopped the unlawful police surveillance of Egyptian citizens, and has compensated those citizens whose properties had been sequestered during the Nasser regime. Furthermore, Sadat, with the help of the Arab Socialist Union and the People's Assembly, has put into effect new laws that provide incentives to potential private foreign and domestic investors. In this respect, Egypt has earmarked several "free zones" along the Gulf canal which are designed to encourage foreign manufacturers to set up industrial projects, both for Egyptian consumption and for export. Iran, Britain, France, Japan, and Germany have already shown a keen interest in establishing export industries in the Egyptian free zones.

Under Sadat, Cairo has abandoned the Nasserite policy of appealing to the non-Egyptian Arab masses directly for support of the Egyptian national interests. Sadat seems to have realized that the previous policy, instead of uniting the Arabs, had caused a serious rift among them. Both domestically and on the regional level, Sadat is following the principle of consensus in reaching agreements with domestic interest groups as well as with the leaders of the Arab states. It seems that once the major territorial issues are settled between the Arabs and the Israelis, the Egyptians will probably turn inward to ameliorate the economic and societal

condition of the country.

At the political level, there are no apparent conflicts between the U.S. and Egypt. Both nations are sincerely working to find an equitable solution to the Arab-Israeli problem; and there seems to be complete agreement between the two states on the method and approach to resolving this dispute. With the exception of the Arab-Israeli conflict, there are, at present, no other major regional issues which might create a serious rift between Egypt and the United States. For the first time in 25 years, the United States and Egypt have the same regional partners and allies-- Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates. All of these states support Egypt politically and commercially, and all of them also have excellent relations with the United States, presently. Neither of the other two Arab states in the region, Syria and Iraq, pose any serious threat to U.S.-Egyptian relations: since Iraq is endeavoring to improve relations with Egypt, there is no reason to believe that Baghdad would create an anti-Egyptian front with Libya or any other regional power.

Iraq

Since July 1968, the Baath regime in Baghdad has been consolidating its power in the country. Although itself beset by intra-party strife, the Baath party has managed to remain in power. After several years of internal struggle between the military and the civilian group, the latter group of the Baath under Saddam Hussein Takriti has achieved paramountcy in the Revolutionary Command Council, the highest decision-making body in Iraq.

In 1970, the Iraqi government announced its willingness to grant autonomy to the Kurds who had been fighting for the recognition of their separate identity for 40 years. After protracted discussions with the opposing factions of the Kurds, the Iraqi government in March 1973 announced a detailed plan for the Kurdish autonomous region. A number of prominent Kurdish leaders have accepted this plan and have started to cooperate with the regime to implement it. Malla Mustafa Barzani, however, has not accepted this plan and has maintained a military conflict with the Iraqi government. In his struggle with Baghdad, Barzani is reportedly being supported by Iran. Since Iran purchases most of its weapons from the United States, Iraq feels that Washington is acquiescent to the Iranian Kurdish policy. This Iraqi perception of the U.S. role in the region

has been a major irritant in Iraqi-U.S. relations.

On the issue of Palestine, the Iraqi regime has rejected the step-by-step approach accepted by Egypt. In addition, Baghdad does not subscribe to the PLO plan that would set up a West Bank Palestinian state in any territory that might be evacuated by Israel. This is another major issue on which the U.S. and Iraq disagree with each other.

Syria

Syria, one of the most unstable political systems in the Middle East, has entered a stage of greater stability. From 1961 until 1970, various groups within the Baath Party and the army struggled for control. Most of the powerful groups have been eliminated now, and the influence of groups thus depends on issue salience and consequent coalition patterns. Hafez Assad enjoys as secure a position in the Syrian political structure as any Syrian leader is likely to have for some time.

Alawi control of Syria has not carried with it the Israeli scapegoat baggage many believe. On the contrary, most Alawis today favor a settlement with Israel as the best assurance of their own economic progress in a developing Syria. And *Syria* itself has greater identity today through Baath and now Assad reforms, and as a result of the struggle against Israel. The Baath Party is nothing more than an agent for the legitimization of Assad and his policies. Unless Assad seeks to strengthen this role--and perhaps even if he does--the Baath Party will continue to diminish in importance.

Hafez Assad will continue to seek peace with Israel in a multilateral context that includes the Palestinians. He will avoid making open and innovative concessions, but will consider means to assure Israeli security, as long as the Golan Heights are returned to Syrian control (or, at the least, removed from Israeli control) and a Palestinian state is created.

Until a peace agreement is reached, Syria will proceed very slowly in rebuilding relations with the United States and will make every reasonable effort to maintain close relations with the Soviet Union. After a peace agreement, Syria will be less reticent in approaching the United States, particularly if the settlement seems to be creating the new environment to which Syria aspires.

Syria will make rapid economic progress if a settlement can be

achieved, and perhaps even without one. In time, this rapid development will lead to the end of Alawi rule, probably by coup. Yet, as they correctly perceive, the Alawis will have been furthered by peace and economic development, for as a group they will have been much more fully integrated into the mainstream of Syrian economic life.

On the whole, the only major conflict between the United States and Syria is over the current pre-Geneva Conference approach toward a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. While there are few important shared interests, either, Syria's crucial position in Middle East political dynamics suggests a higher priority for the restoration of better relations and the exploitation of shared interests.

Due to the classified material,

- pages 300 through 306 are deleted
by the source agency.

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